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Hamas agrees to conditional Fatah talks

AMMAN (AFP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, which opposes the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal with Israel, has agreed to hold talks in Yemen with Fatah, the organisation's main faction, the Hamas representative here said Saturday. Mohammad Nazzari told AFP his movement had sent a written message to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh on Saturday telling him it agreed to meet in Yemen with Fatah's Central Committee, provided PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, did not attend. He said he had set that condition because Mr. Arafat had recognised Israel's right to exist and Mr. Abbas had subsequently signed on Sept. 13 an autonomy accord with Israel. Yemen offered to sponsor an inter-Palestinian meeting in Sanaa after the peace agreement was inked in Washington. Mr. Nazzari said a date for the reconciliation talks had not been set. He said intensive contacts were underway between Hamas and other Palestinian forces ahead of a meeting in Damascus Sept. 30 of 10 factions opposed to the PLO-Israeli agreement (see page 10).

U.N. response to Libyan questions

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has sent a response to Libya's questions about how the Lockerbie airline bombing case will be handled. A U.N. statement issued following a meeting between Dr. Ghali and Libyan Ambassador Ali Ahmad Houideri said the answers were drafted in consultation with the United States, Britain and France but gave no other details. On Sept. 14, Libyan envoy Abdul Ati Al Obeidi sent the secretary general a lengthy document laying out Libya's position on the case. Mr. Obeidi said that the two Libyans accused in the 1988 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, would agree to stand trial in a British court if they could obtain certain guarantees on the treatment and sentences they will receive. Diplomats have said that if Tripoli does not hand over the suspects, Britain, the United States and France will propose tightening sanctions against Libya on Oct. 1. A draft resolution on new sanctions which has been circulating at U.N. headquarters, includes a freeze on Libyan assets and an embargo on oil-producing equipment. An air and arms embargo was imposed on Tripoli in 1992.

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Yeltsin says rebels near surrender, but diehards press push

Combined agency dispatches
 MOSCOW — President Boris Yeltsin confidently stated Saturday that his rivals holed up in the defunct parliament were near surrender as they also conceded their resistance to the Kremlin may be moved out of Moscow.

But rebel military commanders in the parliament continued preparing armed paramilitary brigades and Alexander Rutskoi, the rival "head of state" appointed by parliament, appealed directly to troops for backing and vowed to stay put.

Mr. Yeltsin, interviewed by Russian Television in his office, compared the resistance effort centred in the parliament to a 100-metre race and asserted supporters of Mr. Rutskoi's nominal administration were "out of breath."

He said lawmakers opposed to his shock decision Tuesday to dissolve the Soviet-era legislature were gradually leaving the premises of the parliament, which remained virtually surrounded Saturday by Interior Ministry troops.

"Soon there will be no more than two left," Mr. Yeltsin stated, referring to Mr. Rutskoi and Russian Khasbulatov, the speaker of the legislature.

"And what will the pair do, all alone in that building? They have nothing, while we have already received the support of 70 countries."

Among the hundreds of deputies and support staff inside the parliament, the mood Saturday was more one of fatigued resignation than combativeness, but by evening several thousand sympathisers had again gathered beside the building.

Speaking at a news conference in the parliament, Mr. Khasbulatov, however, served notice that he did not consider the fight against Mr. Yeltsin finished but admitted that Kremlin opponents may need time to regroup.

"If the White House (parliament) remains closed off by force we will transfer the legislative power to one of the regions of Russia," Mr. Khasbulatov stated.

The parliament restored partial electricity supplies with a reserve generator after city authorities cut off the building and plunged it into total darkness for two hours.

The return of electricity was greeted with cheers by deputies, personnel and journalists. Parliament officials said an independent generator inside the building was used, but it was not clear for how long supplies could last.

The waiting game continued, and Mr. Yeltsin, who has been backed by the army, police and public opinion, kept up the pressure.

Hundreds of his riot police ringed the parliament building, where at least 100 lawmakers have been closeted since Mr. Yeltsin dissolved parliament Tuesday and called new elections for December.

On Saturday, Mr. Yeltsin issued a decree promising that lawmakers and demonstrators who gave up peacefully would not be prosecuted. He said any government officials or military officers who disobeyed him would be fired.

Inside, lawmakers used cigarette lighters to find their way down hallways early Saturday and ate at the parliament cafeteria by candlelight.

They slept in their offices, and some had not spoken with their families in days.

One lawmaker, Anatoly Anikiev, said after completing morning exercises in his office that he was resigned to an eventual surrender but was staying in the building out of solidarity.

"My conscience is clear," he said.

Mr. Anikiev said he probably has no political future, but he believes Mr. Yeltsin will not last long either. "Once his cohorts have got what they want, he'll be cast off," he said.

Outside, anti-Yeltsin protesters — a mix of communists, extreme Russian nationalists, monarchists and anti-semites — kept up their vigil around the White House.

An overnight crowd of about 500 grew to more than 2,000 as the day turned warm and sunny. The diehards spend nights around bonfires in the White House parking lots and have brought cabinets full of pots and pans for cooking.

"You foreign turds, get off our land!" an angry woman in a heavy wool coat bellowed at photographers. "Go buy land in Israel."

The Interior Ministry and the mayor's office warned the curious to stay away from the White House, saying hardliners were planning "another provocation." On Thursday, gunmen attacked a military installation, killing a police officer and a nearby resident.

Mr. Yeltsin responded Friday by ordering security forces to disarm protesters and authorised them to shoot to kill if necessary.

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KING MEETS RUSSIAN ENVOY: His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court Saturday Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Anikiev and reviewed with him the latest developments in the Middle East and issues of common concern to Jordan and Russia. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali and a delegation accompanying Mr. Anikiev (see related story on page 3)

King: Decision on election in the next few days

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein said Saturday that he would take a decision in the next few days on the question of holding the general elections on schedule.

"Even though we are a few days away from taking a decision in this respect, I cannot tell if there will be any change in our plans to hold the elections in November," King Hussein said in an interview with the London-based Al Hayat newspaper.

"We have to be ready soon for the moment when we should accept resignations of nominees who should prepare for the elections," he said.

But so far, the King said, the possibility of delaying the elections was contemplated and advocated by many in Jordan.

"In this short time there is a need for defining the path Jordan should follow with regard to the future and national unity and ensure that the coming election campaign would not be a battle between proponents and opponents which would not be in the interest of democracy," the King said.

"It will be a chance for anyone to enter the arena and harm the picture of (democracy and national unity) of this united family," he said.

In answer to a question about how he viewed the Palestinian-Israeli accord and whether it would lead to a just and comprehensive peace, the King said: "What is

important is to concentrate on national unity but this does not mean that we should infringe upon the rights of the Arab individuals of Palestinian origin with regard to compensation or repatriation. Any discussion on the nature of relationship, regardless of its name, can only come about when the circumstances are ripe. These circumstances can only be available when people can exercise their rights freely."

On Jordan's drive to improve relations with the Gulf states, especially with Saudi Arabia, the King expressed hope that the relations will return to normal and said:

"I have shouldered a great responsibility during my political life in this country and I always believed that any difference that occurred was a result of differences in approach. I have noticed or heard that some believe that I have caused personal harm to him. If so, I personally apologise because I never meant to harm any one in my life. I have always wanted to serve all. Now that you mention Saudi Arabia, I would like to seize the opportunity to reiterate that if my brother, the custodian of the Holy Places, (King Fahd) had understood that I had harmed him personally, then I say that it was not intentional."

On Israel's shift on its so-called "Jordanian option," the King said: "It is perhaps appropriate to describe the Israeli government's decision (to enter the accord with the PLO) as realistic and farsighted... I believe that the Israelis have finally found that the problem should be tackled on the Palestinian-Israeli level regarding the Palestinians' rights on their national soil and this will open the door for possibilities for progress along other tracks towards a permanent and just peace in the region."

On the prospects of confederation, either a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation or Palestinian-Israeli confederation, the King said: "What is

King congratulates de Klerk, Mandela, voices hope for consolidation of relations

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday welcomed the formation of a multi-racial council in South Africa ahead of the country's first elections including blacks and expressed hope that Jordanian-South African relations would be consolidated soon.

In a message he sent to South African President F.W. de Klerk, the King congratulated the president on the setting up of the council and also voiced hope that the Muslim community in South Africa would contribute to play a major role in reshaping the country.

In a separate message to African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela, the King said:

"Today we would like to express the hope that all citizens of South Africa will, regardless of race or ethnic origins, participate in shaping their future and will reap the benefits of democracy and respect for human rights."

Following are highlights from the King's message to President de Klerk:

"It is with great pleasure that I extend the congratulations of the Jordanian government and people on the historic decision of creating the multi-racial transitional council in South Africa ahead of South Africa's first non-racial elections to be held in April 1994."

"In view of constitutional changes in South Africa and with a background of H.E. Roelof Botha's visit to Jordan in April of this year, Jordan welcomes the consolidation of our bilateral relations in the near future."

"Jordan has always viewed cooperation with South Africa within the context of interna-

tional as well as pan-Arab and pan-African stands which confirm the need to establish pluralism. We are deeply conscious furthermore of the active contribution of the South African Islamic community and we would like to express the hope that the community will continue to play a major role in the establishment of a multi-cultural society in South Africa."

"We are aware that if it were not for your actions and goodwill and that of the leaders of courage and vision this historic event would not have been realisable. Regional stability and peace can only be enhanced by these momentous actions."

Clinton's call

In Washington, President Bill Clinton called for an end to the remaining economic sanctions against South Africa. Friday and asked Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, the top black in his cabinet, to lead a trade mission there.

Responding to request from Mr. Mandela (see page 3), Mr. Clinton called on state and local government to stop boycotting South Africa.

He also said Washington would do its part to bolster the country economically by "taking steps necessary to permit lending to South Africa from the International Monetary Fund."

In an interview on the Cable News Network (CNN) later, South President De Klerk pledged he would cooperate with Mr. Mandela if he is elected president in South Africa's first multi-racial elections next April 27.

U.S. warns not to expect Syria-Israel breakthrough

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The United States warned Friday against expecting a quick breakthrough between Israel and Syria on the heels of the agreement between the Jewish state and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"I would caution against saying that there is a breakthrough imminent" in the Syrian-Israeli track of the peace talks, State Department spokesman Michael McCurry said at a briefing.

"It's a false expectation to think there will be agreement on top of agreement in this process," Mr. McCurry said, referring to the Sept. 13 agreement between Israel and the PLO and the Sept. 14 agenda signed by representatives of Israel and Jordan.

"In the case of the Syrian-Israel track, there's just a great deal of work that lies ahead," Mr. McCurry said.

Expectations of a deal between Israel and Syria were bolstered on Thursday when Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said he had good news to share with Secretary of State Warren Christopher on this matter.

Mr. Musa declined to elaborate and Mr. McCurry gave no further details, but noted that for the first time in years, a Syrian foreign minister, Farouk Al Sharaa, was to meet with Mr. Christopher in Washington on Oct. 5.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in an interview published Wednesday, said Israel could stage a four-month withdrawal from the Golan Heights under a deal being discussed with Syria. Mr. Mubarak met with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad on Wednesday.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Friday Israel

and Syria were discussing a draft framework for a peace treaty but still have deep differences over the essence of peace and the scope of Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

A senior Egyptian official, meanwhile, said that Mr. Rabin had rejected a proposed peace agreement with Syria, citing doubts about Damascus' intentions, the Israeli daily Maariv reported.

In several newspaper interviews published on Friday, Mr. Rabin blasted Syria for supporting Palestinian groups and blocking a possible peace deal between Lebanon and Israel.

"We still don't have an answer whether Syria wants peace," he told Maariv. "Syria is blocking progress."

He said Syria was encouraging 10 Palestinian groups opposed to the Sept. 13 agreement.

Mr. Rabin criticised Syria for preventing a deployment of Lebanese army north of Israel's "security zone" in southern Lebanon. Israel has said that during a test period of six months, the Lebanese army could disarm anti-Israeli guerrillas active in the area, and that full peace with Lebanon could be reached in another three months.

Turning to bilateral issues, he told Maariv that "there is a draft of an agreement on principles, but it still has not moved beyond the problematic attitude regarding the depth of withdrawal and the essence of peace."

"Syria has not given a clear answer about the essence of peace that it wants," Mr. Rabin said in a separate interview with the daily Yedioth Ahronot.

"I know one thing: That the price for peace in the Syrian eyes is based on the precedent

of peace with Egypt," he said. "And this is a difficult decision."

Israel signed a peace treaty with Egypt in 1979, but in exchange, it returned the Sinai peninsula seized in the 1967 Middle East war.

The Israeli public opinion seems largely opposed to a similar deal on the Golan.

"I am told that recently there has been a change on the (Syrian) side regarding the essence of peace," Mr. Rabin said in the Maariv interview. "The Americans and also the Egyptians are telling me this."

Mr. Rabin did not elaborate, but recent newspaper reports have suggested a phased Israeli withdrawal that could take several years and be preceded by an Israeli recognition of Syrian sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

Maariv quoted a senior Egyptian official as saying that President Mubarak proposed a similar agreement during a summit with Mr. Rabin in Alexandria Sunday.

Mr. Mubarak told Mr. Rabin that Syria would be ready for a full-fledged peace and normalisation of relations with Israel in exchange for recognition of its sovereignty over the Golan and a partial Israeli withdrawal within several months, the official was quoted as saying.

But Mr. Rabin "was not excited" about the proposal, which Mr. Mubarak felt Israel "could not resist," the official said.

"Egypt proposed to mediate in creating an equation acceptable for Israel, dealing with the depth of peace in exchange for security arrangements and Syrian agreement to the deployment of an international force

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Somalis down U.S. helicopter; 3 American soldiers killed

Combined agency dispatches

MOGADISHU — Somalis paraded the charred remains of three U.S. soldiers killed when a helicopter was shot down Saturday, sparking ground fighting that wounded three other Americans and three Pakistanis.

Five Somalis were killed and 56 wounded, 15 of them seriously, hospital officials said. The Somali National Alliance (SNA) faction of fugitive warlord Mohammed Farah Aidede said 69 Somalis were killed and 196 wounded. But the claim could not immediately be confirmed.

In their first successful strike against U.S. attack helicopters that patrol the skies over Mogadishu 24 hours a day, suspected Aidede fighters shot down the Uh-60 Blackhawk gunship with a rocket-propelled grenade that exploded on impact, U.N. spokesman David Stockwell said.

Major Stockwell said the helicopter, flown by soldiers of the U.S. Quick Reaction Force, burst into flames when it crashed near Mogadishu's new port after being hit around two a.m. Saturday (2300

GMT) Friday).

He said the helicopter was "on a routine reconnaissance mission." But military sources said it was searching for Gen. Aidede's mortars after six shells slammed into the airport, causing no casualties.

The pilot and co-pilot survived with slight injuries, but the other three soldiers in the crew were killed.

Military sources said their bodies were "burned beyond recognition." The two survivors managed to walk to the new port, guarded by soldiers of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Another three Americans and the three Pakistanis were wounded in sniper fire as they retrieved the bodies from the wreckage, Maj. Stockwell said.

A jubilant crowd of Somalis later surrounded the wreckage and displayed what looked like strips of charred flesh on sticks. One man held up a U.S. soldier's dog-tag.

Men brought sacks containing what they said were the soldiers' remains to south Mogadishu's Sahafi Hotel where most journalists stay.

Maj. Stockwell said some body parts may have been left behind when the bodies were

retrieved as they had been badly mutilated by the Grenade blast.

"If Somalis were in fact displaying parts of the American bodies in triumph, then I would call those actions hideous and barbaric," Maj. Stockwell said.

He said all five wounded Americans, whose injuries were not life-threatening, had been flown out of Somalia.

The deaths of the three Americans brought to seven the number of U.S. servicemen slain here since the United Nations took command of the Somalia operation from the United States on May 4. Fifty-six U.N. soldiers have been killed in all. And another seven have died accidentally.

Maj. Stockwell called the grenade that downed the Blackhawk "an unlucky hit."

Since May, more than 50 U.N. peacekeepers have been killed in Somalia in attacks the United Nations blames on general Aidede.

The helicopter attack was likely to lead to more criticism in the U.S. Congress about the American role in what has turned from a humanitarian

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Israel marks holy day in isolation

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israelis on Saturday marked the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur, by virtually switching off the entire country and sealing the borders with the occupied territories.

On the day of atonement, when Jews are instructed by their holy book, the Torah, to ask God for forgiveness for all the sins committed in the past 12 months, the state of Israel traditionally grinds to a halt.

Air links with the rest of the world were cut off as Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion international airport closed for the day. Television and radio broadcasts stopped.

Shops and restaurants, even those normally open on the Sabbath, kept their shutters firmly lowered. The streets were practically deserted, only synagogues remained alive, bustling with the faithful.

But the discovery of the body of a 21-year-old Israeli man, apparently killed by hardliners opposed to Israel's self-rule deal with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), provided a grim reminder of the legacy of occupation.

"On the eve of Yom Kippur... twenty years after that hard war, after other wars... we are trying to walk a new path," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told Israel in a pre-recorded radio address.

His comments followed the final news broadcasts at 2 p.m. (1200 GMT), which contained initial reports of the killing — the first of an Israeli since Israel and the PLO signed their historic peace accord in Washington on Sept. 13.

"Near the end of this (Jewish) year... Israel signed an Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles and an agenda for negotiations with Jordan. In the coming year, may it be good for us, it is possible that there will be peace," he said.

Despite the breakthrough with the PLO, Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip and

West Bank were not being allowed to cross into Israel on Saturday.

Roadblocks went up Friday and were to remain in place until Sunday.

After Mr. Rabin's address, state radio stations went off the air. Israel Television had signed off earlier. All transportation, including planes at Ben-Gurion international airport, stopped.

The streets were empty of all vehicles by the time sirens wailed at sunset to mark the holiest day for the Jews.

Just hours before the fast began, police said an Israeli man had been found stabbed to death in central Israel. They said Arabs opposed to the Israel-PLO peace accord had killed him.

"At 1 p.m. (1100 GMT) police found a body of a 21-year-old man in a field... next to the (town of) Ramana (near Tel Aviv)... the autopsy just done found that he was murdered two days ago," a police spokeswoman said.

"Also found on the body was a note from (the Islamic Resistance Movement) Hamas, so security forces believe the background is nationalist," she said.

Hamas on Saturday claimed responsibility for the killing and called for increased resistance to Israeli occupation.

Hamas said in a statement faxed to the Associated Press in Amman that a member of the Hamas' Izzeddin Al Qassam unit "stabbed the reserve" in Israel.

In Gaza City, masked Arabs shot to death a fellow Palestinian whom they accused of collaborating with Israel.

This year's Yom Kippur was also the 20th anniversary of the 1973 Middle East war. That war was a deep trauma for Israel, which lost nearly 3,000 soldiers.

Most newspapers printed special supplements in which soldiers and officers recalled the events of the war and relatives mourned those who died on the battlefield.

Palestinians seek prisoner release

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Now that Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have made peace, Palestinians in the occupied territories are seeking for the release of their 13,000 "prisoners of war" who are languishing in Israeli detention centres.

"The liberation of the detainees is an essential part of the accord between Israel and the PLO. It is obvious that they must be freed," Mahmoud Al Aker, a member of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, told AFP at the weekend.

Many of the prisoners are being held for offences committed during the uprising against Israeli forces in the occupied territories. Stone-throwing, or aiming molotov cocktails at Israeli soldiers.

A press report in Jerusalem this week said the Israeli authorities were shortly to begin freeing 11,000 of the prisoners in a move precipitated by the historic peace deal signed in Washington on 13.

The rest, labelled "terrorists" and others considered dangerous, would be moved to a prison inside Israel, the report said.

The deal signed by the PLO and Israel grants autonomy to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, and the report said 2,000 "maximum security" Palestinian prisoners would be transferred from prisons in the Strip and the West Bank into Israel itself.

The Gaza prisoners will be moved in April after Israeli troops in the region have been

redeployed in accordance with the peace pact, the report said. Detainees from the five West Bank prisons will be moved within the coming months, it said.

The Israeli Defence Ministry refused either to confirm or to deny the reports, saying only that "all matters including that of the Palestinian prisoners will be the subject of negotiations with the PLO."

Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks with Israel, hinted earlier this week that Israel was delaying the prisoners' release to wait for the Israeli public to become accustomed to the dramatic events of the past weeks.

"Israel has agreed in principle to free the prisoners, but it can't happen immediately. It is linked to the political situation in Israel," she said.

The Hadashot newspaper meanwhile reported that 4,000 Palestinian supporters of Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction of the PLO would be released as Israeli forces began their retreat from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, forecast to start on Dec. 13.

No details have emerged so far on whether the release will favour prisoners known to belong to Fatah.

The two other main factions in the PLO, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, have vowed to carry on fighting Israel, as has the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS), which rivals Fatah for popularity in the Gaza Strip.

Kurds in border town decry Turkish tactics

DOGUBEYAZIT, Turkey (R) — A chilly breeze blows through the bullet-shattered windows of the mayor's office in this Kurdish-populated town in eastern Turkey.

Upstairs, on the third floor of the new municipality building, local officials showed reporters a wrecked conference room and the hole torn in one wall by what they say was a shell fired from a Turkish tank parked 20 metres away.

"Turkish officials will say it was the PKK (Kurdish Labour Party), but the security forces did the damage," said a municipal official, displaying shrapnel fragments and Turkish-made heavy machinegun bullets found in the building.

The elected mayor, Mustafa Ozbay, said there had been a 20-minute shootout between PKK guerrillas and security forces in the town starting at 11 p.m. on Aug. 30.

Turkish forces had continued firing heavy weapons for the rest of the night, even though the PKK had withdrawn, he said.

Two people were wounded. A primary school, several shops and a hotel under construction in the same street as the municipality were hit. The district governor's office and gendarme barracks nearby suffered no visible damage.

The government-appointed district governor declined to meet reporters at his office, where unsmiling police commanders and plainclothes security men milled around the courtyard.

The violence in Dogubeyazit recalled the battering meted out by Turkish troops last year to Sirtak, Kulp and Cukurca — southeastern towns where Kurdish nationalism is strong.

A similar sequence of a brief PKK raid followed by sustained gunfire from the security forces occurred in Dogubeyazit on July 27, local

officials said. On Sept. 13, security forces intervened to disperse a crowd which had surrounded two brawling townsmen. An armoured vehicle crushed two men, killing one and paralyzing another from the waist down. Two other people were hurt.

Local officials said security forces unceremoniously buried the dead man during the night with a single relative present.

They said about 300 people in Dogubeyazit and nearby villages were in police custody, about half of them on formal charges. Among them is the local branch chairman of the Kurdish-based Democracy Party, detained on Aug. 14.

Dogubeyazit is a nondescript truckstop on the way to the Iranian border about 30 kilometres away. Tanks and trucks are lined up at a big military compound on its outskirts.

Troops, planes and helicopters have been in action for weeks against PKK rebels concealed in the fractured, volcanic slopes of Mount Tendurek to the south and on snow-capped Mount Agri (Ararat), towering over the countryside to the north.

The Turkish military says the guerrillas have lost hundreds killed. They explain the relatively small number of bodies found by saying the PKK take their dead with them, throw them off cliffs or chop them up and bury them in plastic bags.

Local officials in Dogubeyazit said security forces had forcibly evacuated 10 to 15 villages on mount agri this month.

No confirmation was immediately available.

Human rights groups in Turkey and abroad say several hundred Kurdish villages have been emptied, some of them burned, in the past four years.

U.N. prepares to switch on cameras at Iraqi sites

Combined agency dispatches

BAGHDAD — U.N. experts visited two Iraqi missile-testing sites near Baghdad Saturday to make final preparations for the activation of surveillance cameras, a U.N. official here said.

The U.N. team headed by Guy Martelle, an American, would supervise the switching on of the six cameras installed at the ballistic missile-testing ranges in July, said the official, who requested anonymity.

The official said the did not know when exactly the cameras would be switched on. "Only Mr. Martelle can say when the operation will begin," he said.

Iraq, after refusing for months, agreed Thursday to allow the surveillance cameras to be used at the Yawm Al Azim and Al Rafah missile-testing sites some 60 kilometres south of Baghdad.

Baghdad agreed that the cameras could be installed, but not activated, in July, defusing a growing crisis amid the threat of U.S. air strikes if it did not comply.

Iraqi newspapers published a letter Saturday from Iraqi

Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Al Sahaf to Rolf Ekeus, head of a U.N. panel supervising Iraqi disarmament, agreeing to the use of the cameras.

In the letter, Mr. Sahaf said Iraq was keen to resolve remaining differences between Iraq and the United Nations.

"We are keen to rapidly restart negotiations in Baghdad...to resolve matters that are unresolved," he said.

Mr. Ekeus is due in Baghdad on Oct. 1 to discuss several aspects of Iraqi disarmament.

Mr. Sahaf added that the use of surveillance systems should be accompanied by a lifting of the U.N. embargo on Iraq.

The cameras are designed to ensure that Iraq complies with U.N. sanctions prohibiting it from testing missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres.

Iraq remains subject to strict sanctions as a result of its failure to comply fully with U.N. resolutions on disarmament passed following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Iraq and U.N. arms officials in early September held more than a week of intensive talks

aimed at reviewing Security Council demands on scrapping Baghdad's nuclear, chemical, biological and ballistic weapons.

A stringent trade embargo, which has left Iraq strapped for cash and short of badly needed supplies, was imposed in August 1990 shortly after Baghdad's troops invaded Kuwait.

Under a 1991 Gulf War ceasefire resolution, the embargo on Iraqi exports, such as oil, can be lifted when the commission certifies Iraq has complied with all its demands.

For Iraq to import goods other than humanitarian supplies, the council stipulated a host of demands including accepting its border with Kuwait and ending any human abuses.

Mr. Ekeus in a detailed report last week noted several areas of progress in the weapons talks but said Iraq still had not disclosed all arms information and needed to accept plans for long-term monitoring to make sure prohibited weapons were not reacquired.

He said the commission would need at least six months after information had been re-

ceived and all monitoring plans were accepted before it could give Baghdad a clean bill of health.

Iraq wants some recognition from the Security Council of its efforts on weapons to date. But the United States, Britain and others insist all sanctions stay in place.

At the U.N. Tim Trevan, spokesman for the special commission, said he would arrive in Baghdad Monday with several technical experts to obtain information Iraqi authorities had promised earlier.

Mr. Ekeus plans to be in Iraq by Sept. 30 so that intensive political and technical talks could begin on Oct. 1.

The negotiations could eventually lead to lifting U.N. sanctions on Iraq's oil exports.

Mr. Ekeus earlier had said he would not resume arms talks until Iraq made good on its promise to activate the monitoring cameras.

Iraq's U.N. Ambassador Nizar Hamdoun said late on Thursday his government had "agreed to activate the cameras as a sign of good will." He said they could be turned on any time the special commission wanted.

Scholars see Jerusalem as key to peace

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Economic development and progress will be as crucial for Palestinians living in Jerusalem as for those in Gaza and Jericho, a panel of analysts and scholars on Jerusalem said Sept. 22.

Although the declaration of principles signed at the White House Sept. 13 defers negotiations on Jerusalem for two years, daily events on the ground "underscore that peace cannot endure unless both Arabs and Israelis have vested economic interests in sustaining it," analysts said.

"Jerusalem is very important to the integrity of the structure of the peace process — each side has enormous stakes in Jerusalem," MacArthur scholar and journalist Helena Cobban pointed out.

"Palestinians in Jerusalem are in as urgent need to encourage and optimism for implementing the Israeli-PLO interim self-governing agreement as those in Gaza or Jericho," she said.

The journalist, who is on the editorial advisory board of the Middle East Journal and a member of Middle East Watch, spent seven years in the Middle East, five as Beirut correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor. Now a

columnist for the Monitor and Al Riyadh newspaper, she has published three books on the region and works with private voluntary organisations to foster peace in the region.

Also appearing in the Sept. 22 Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine (CPAP) symposium were Ibrahim Daddak, a Palestinian development consultant living in Jerusalem; the Rev. David Jaeger of the Diocese of Austin, Texas; and Ibrahim Mattar, deputy director for American Near-East Refugee Aid (ANERA).

Ms. Cobban, in her analysis, urged that international efforts to raise funds for the peace process include funds for Palestinian institutions and businesses in East Jerusalem "in order to maintain optimism for implementation of the interim agreement."

She also urged that the United States as key co-sponsor seek equal rights for Israeli and Palestinian people of Jerusalem, without which, she said, "there can be no lasting peace in Gaza or Jericho or Tel Aviv."

Ms. Cobban said after reading two recent studies that present possible solutions, that she is convinced it is possible to meet the condition set by both sides for peaceful resolution.

A recent study by an Israeli Knesset member, Dr. Naimo Ghazan, "negotiating the non-negotiable," examines the role of Jerusalem "with great creativity," she noted.

And a joint study — by two Jerusalem residents, Moshe Amirav, a member of the Jerusalem City Council, and Hanna Simora, editor of Al Fajr — is a remarkable "and pragmatic... achievement," she said, noting the study's conclusion: "An Israeli says 'this is my city'."

A Palestinian says "this is my city."

Now we, together, will say: "This is our city."

Dr. Ibrahim Mattar, who has been responsible for ANERA development projects in the West Bank and Gaza, said that no housing construction for Palestinians has been permitted since 1967. He said new demographic figures show 152,000 Jewish settlers in Jerusalem as opposed to 150,000 Palestinians today.

While "exceptionally good ties" exist between Muslim and Christian communities in Jerusalem, he said, due to economic pressures "only 9,000 Christian Palestinians remain in the city."

Ibrahim Daddak, a member of the board of trustees of Bir

Zeit University and the College of Science and Technology in Jerusalem, also said "continuous creation of facts on the ground will make resolution increasingly difficult" unless interim steps are taken. He said it is the responsibility of the international community "to encourage the lifting of housing and zoning restrictions imposed on the Palestinian community."

Mr. Jaeger said the agreement between Israelis and Palestinians "must bring freedom not only to nationals, to religious groups; it must bring freedom to citizens on both sides of the Israeli and Palestinian communities and freedom which must spread through the Middle East."

Although the Helsinki "was not even a binding document" he said it nevertheless "proved to be a mighty instrument to galvanize the peoples of Eastern Europe to achieve freedom."

The final peace settlement, he said, should include something like the Helsinki final act — which would be the beginning of the road for all of the peoples of the region to build free and peaceful societies that acknowledge cultural and religious diversity.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'U.S. refused to assist in coup against Saddam'

DUBAI (R) — The United States refused to back a coup to topple Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for fear it might handicap American efforts to forge peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours, an Arabic weekly reported. The London-based Al Wasat said in a report to be published on Monday that leaders of the coup plot had sought American assistance during meetings at a hotel in London. Officers from the main branches of the Iraqi army, backed by ground troops, the airforce and a number of politicians, were set to move against President Saddam on Revolution Day on July 17, it said. Washington "was aware of all the details of the plan" but turned down requests by coup leaders to provide air coverage and strike certain Iraqi military installations. Washington "feared its field or military aid to the coup plotters could delay the big development which happened in the peace process and was crowned with the Israeli-Palestinian accord," the weekly added. The detailed report quotes a number of unnamed Western and Arab intelligence officers, diplomats and Iraqi opposition sources. It said about 1,200 people have been arrested since the plot was discovered.

Iran seeks drug accord with neighbours

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran is trying to conclude an accord with Pakistan and Afghanistan allowing security forces from any of the three to chase drug traffickers "all over" the other two states, a top official said. General Reza Seifollahi, Iran's drug czar, did not divulge at what stage negotiations with Islamabad and Kabul were in, according to the official news agency IRNA. He said Iranian security forces had set up 20 roadblocks on the Pakistani border to prevent drug traffickers from getting into Iran, adding this measure had "hit hard" against the drug trade. Iran is used as a transit country for the multi-million dollar drug industry originating mainly in the opium poppies grown in Afghanistan and Pakistan and ending up as highly prized hard drugs in the West. Security forces in the Islamic Republic are waging an increasingly militant battle against the traders who travel across the borders in the desolate and sparsely populated semi-desert in the east of the country. Traffickers transport their wares in heavily fortified convoys, and security forces have been taken to using artillery, armoured vehicles and air strikes to combat them.

Arafat to visit France next month

PARIS (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat will pay an official visit to France next month, the PLO's representative to Paris said Friday. "President Arafat will come to Paris in the first half of October," Leila Chaheid told a press breakfast. Ms. Chaheid added that she expected Mr. Arafat to establish residences in the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip within 10 to 12 weeks. "During the earlier stages (following agreed Israeli withdrawal from those areas) he will reside sometimes in Jericho, sometimes in Gaza and sometimes abroad," she said.

British minister pledges support for Eritrea

ASMARA (R) — British Overseas Minister Baroness Lynda Chalker pledged support in rebuilding the war-shattered economy of Eritrea, the world's newest state, as she ended a visit on Friday. Ms. Chalker paid tribute to the Red Sea state's 30-year fight for independence when she visited the half-wrecked port of Massawa, close to the mountain capital Asmara. "We in Britain deeply lament the terrible human loss and devastation wrought at Massawa," she said. "But, we are also happy that the sacrifice paid was not in vain, for it has resulted in an internationally recognised, independent Eritrea," she added. Massawa was strafed and cluster-bombed by the MG jets of former Ethiopian dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam after it was captured by the former rebel Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in February 1990. The rebels had fought from Addis Ababa since the former Italian colony was annexed by Ethiopia in 1961. In May 1991 the EPLF helped defeat Colonel Mengistu's Soviet-backed army and in July this year Eritrea won independence after a referendum.

Egyptian officer killed

ASSIUT (AP) — Suspected Muslim militants Saturday shot dead a plainclothes policeman in a continuing spiral of violence against security forces in southern Egypt.

The attack, the fourth in less than a week, came a day after the chief of security was replaced in Assiut province, a centre of Muslim extremist action against police, Coptic Christians and foreign tourists.

Witnesses said two pistol-wielding gunmen shot police Kamal Anwar Mohammad, 25, at mid-morning Saturday in Baqour, southern Assiut, then fled on foot.

They said the assailants were clean-shaven, wearing Western-style clothes, which serves as a disguise for men known for the traditional heavy beards and white robes of pious Egyptians.

The government blames most of the violence on the extremist Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah.

Kuwait assembly fosters more open government

By William Maclean

Reuters

KUWAIT — Kuwait's opposition-dominated parliament has established a framework for more open government and more accountable economic management in a lively return to the political stage after a six-year break.

The newly elected assembly on the Arab Western shores of the Gulf, it crowned a hectic 1992/93 sitting with the surprise passage of a law setting out a mechanism for solving a festering debt problem that has hamstrung the economy for a decade.

Kuwait's parliamentary experience is watched jealously by democrats elsewhere in the Gulf who set great store by its success as a signal for other conservative Gulf rulers to follow.

Despite the debt law and establishment of a cooperative it sometimes heated working relationship with the government, some MPs be-

gan the summer recess this month with mixed feelings about their handling of a range of other sensitive issues.

These include alleged graft by defence and investment officials and efforts to seek the return of up to 600 Kuwaitis allegedly taken captive during the Gulf crisis.

"The parliament was able to achieve very important laws especially the bad debts law and the public money protection law," said MP Mufarrej Al Mutairi.

"These achievements are really satisfying," he said. "I think the people were expecting more," said MP Abdullah Al Nibari. "I believe that the people were hoping for a better and bigger performance by their elected representatives, especially on issues like the foreign investment scandal."

At the closing session Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah promised MPs more hard work

and what he called more serious responsibilities, which he did not specify.

He said legislative and executive cooperation indicated "our parliamentary march is on the right track and forms a strong incentive for our keen desire to build a better future."

Cooperation between the government and the assembly — a collection of democrats, leftists, nationalists and Islamists — was eased when six MPs were appointed to the cabinet.

But the relationship showed strain at times in the assembly that emerged among the most outspoken in the Arab World since it was elected last year. The previous parliament was dissolved at the height of the Iran-Iraq war in 1986 when the Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah cited security concerns.

"In the debate over latest laws, such as the bad debts and the budget, the govern-

ment and the deputies were like two people in a quarrel, each of them grabbing the other's collar and saying 'if you let go, I'll let go'," said an MP who declined to be identified.

Some commentators said that one of parliament's weaknesses was that, eager to return to the political fray, it had simply taken on too much work and was in danger of dissipating its energies.

The year's parliamentary highlights included:

— A law laying down repayment options for 9,546 corporate and individual borrowers, including some of the emirate's wealthiest individuals, who owe almost \$20 billion in bad debts that date back in some cases to 1982.

Economists say the move will provide a medium-term boost to the sluggish economy.

— A law stiffening penalties for abuse of public funds and establishing parliamentary oversight of state investment operations.

— Repeal of a tough secrecy law that had enabled ministers to declare confidential any information possessed by their officials — MPs said it had been used to conceal wrongdoing.

— An angry investigative report into alleged corruption in the management of a multi-billion dollar worldwide network of state investments meant to fund the country when the oil runs out.

— An investigation into alleged corruption in the handling of defence procurement contracts — charges strongly denied by the Defence Ministry.

— An investigation into all aspects of government handling of the crisis with Iraq before the August 1990 invasion.

— A review of all government actions since the previous parliament was dissolved in 1986.

The assembly is expected to reassemble in the last week of October.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Le Monde est a Vous
19:00 News in French
19:15 Le Journal de l'histoire
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Step By Step
21:10 Doc. — "The Loveliest Journey"
22:00 News in English
22:30 "The Outsider"

PRAYER TIMES

05:04 Fajr
06:22 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:27 Asr
15:53 Maghreb
18:33 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swefish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Ternaretsa Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 630843.

Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Armenian International Church Tel. 625256.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 604195.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 659932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675591.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Weather will be fine and winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman 15 / 23

Aqaba 22 / 34

Deserts 14 / 33

Jordan Valley 20 / 35

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 37, Aqaba 32.4, Humidity readings: Amman 38 per cent, Aqaba 51 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Ahmad Othman 786384
Dr. Adnan Al Zaghoul 898140
Dr. Ghaleb Zaidieh 736011
Dr. Youssef Abdo 694916
Firas pharmacy 661912
Firdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairouth pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmaita pharmacy 637680
Najati pharmacy 847632

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ahmad Othman 786384
Dr. Adnan Al Zaghoul 898140
Dr. Ghaleb Zaidieh 736011
Dr. Youssef Abdo 694916
Firas pharmacy 661912
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EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 661111
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 43021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 661646
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111



Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday inaugurates the International Festival of Fine Arts at the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman (Petra photo)

Queen inaugurates international fine arts festival in Kingdom

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday inaugurated the opening of the International Festival of Fine Arts, marking the beginning of a series of cultural and artistic workshops and activities.

Held at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, the festival is sponsored by the Royal Society of Fine Arts in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Amman Municipality, as well as the Open Atelier of Tunisia.

The first of its kind in Jordan, the festival includes artists from the United States,

France, Italy, Cyprus, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Tunisia, Palestine and Jordan. It is the hub of cultural and artistic exchange depicting "Light and Colour in Nabatean Civilisation."

This intra-cultural exchange serves not only as a medium for cross-continental integration, but also as a promotion of Jordan's history and heritage.

Following a welcoming speech by H.H. Princess Wajdan Ali, the Queen met with the participating artists. She also attended a dance performance by two American artists.

Among the festival's facilities will be exhibitions and workshops, site-tours to various parts of the Kingdom, as well as informative lectures of the art history of participating countries.

Receiving the Queen at the Gallery were President of the Royal Society of Fine Arts Princess Wajdan and Minister of Tourism Yanal Hikmat.

Queen Noor was also received by Mayor of Amman, Mamdouh Al Abaddi, as well as by board members of the Royal Society of Fine Arts.

JD to remain in circulation in occupied lands — CBJ

By P. V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian dinar will remain in circulation in the Israeli-occupied territories pending further developments in the Middle East peace process, a senior official of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) said Saturday.

Jamal Salah, executive director of the Research and Studies Department at the CBJ, also said that Jordanian banking rules would apply to reopened branches of the Kingdom's commercial banks in the occupied territories.

Dr. Salah was addressing a two-day seminar on Jordan's economy organised by Economic Perspectives, a monthly newsletter.

The Jordanian dinar will continue to be in circulation in the occupied territories "for the next one or two years at least," he said, not-

ing that the long-term prospects for the currency remaining in force there depended on the shape and nature of implementing the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement signed on Sept. 13.

Dr. Salah did not elaborate. But his comments, which came in reply to questions at the seminar, countered assertions in underground leaflets that a "secret annex" to the Israel-PLO accord stipulated that the Israeli shekel will replace the dinar in the occupied territories.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat last week categorically stated that there was no secret annex to the agreement and accused opponents of the accord of resorting to "false propaganda."

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, presenting the accord for approval by the Knesset (parliament) last

week, also said there were no secret additions of clauses to the accord, signed under U.S. and Russian sponsorship at the White House.

Senior U.S. officials have also made similar denials. No official estimates are available on the volume of Jordanian dinars in circulation in the occupied territories, but unofficial assessments put the figure at around JD 150 million.

Despite the Israeli occupation and Jordan's severance of legal administrative ties with the West Bank in 1988, the two million Palestinians in the occupied territories continue to use the Jordanian dinar, which is also accepted by Israelis.

All business transactions and accounts, including inventories, are in Jordanian dinars.

Dr. Salah told the Amman seminar that discussions were continuing on the reopening

of Jordanian banks in the occupied territories.

Without going into details, he said, "We expect the situation to be the same as that prevailed before 1967," when Israel occupied the territories and Jordanian banks closed their operations.

"The general Jordanian banking law (applied by the CBJ) will apply to the reopened branches," he said.

At least two Jordanian banks have submitted applications to the CBJ for permission to reopen some of their closed branches and start new ones in the West Bank.

Israeli insistence on retaining its central bank's control over the branches and signing an "official" agreement with the CBJ were the major snags holding up the applications, sources said.

The CBJ refused to let the Israeli central bank to have total control over the branches, the sources said. The Kingdom also resisted the Jewish state's quest to sign an official document with Jordan (as represented by the sought-for accord) before the two sides sign a peace agreement, they said.

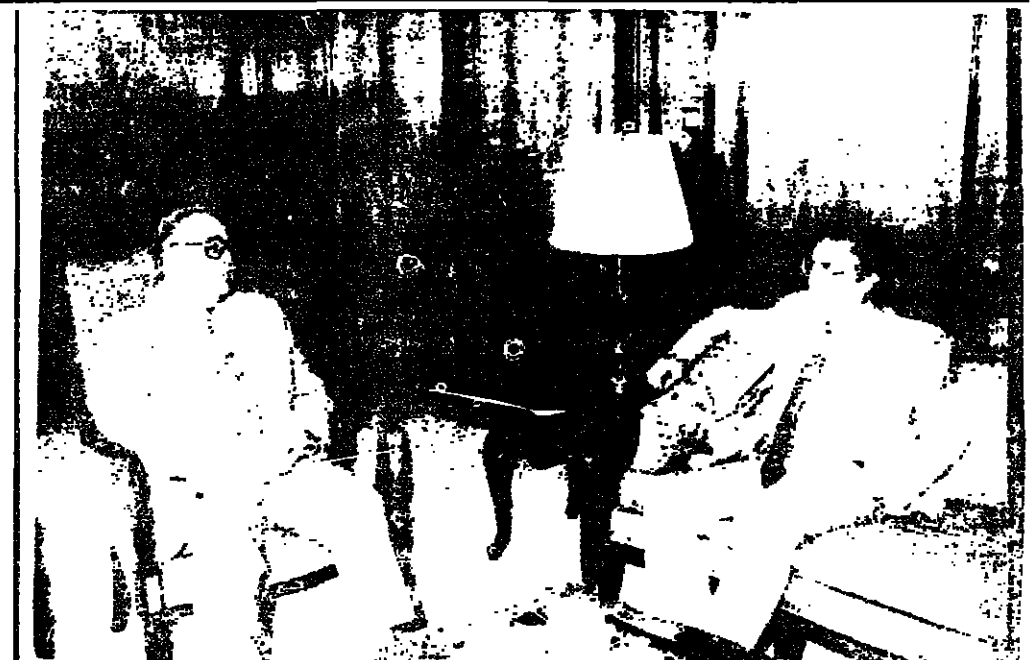
Dr. Salah restricted his comments to monetary terms and policy without elaborating on the political comments. However, his comments were taken to indicate that Israel might have shifted its position following the signing of the accord with the PLO.

Only one Palestinian-owned bank, The Bank of Palestine, operates in the occupied Gaza Strip. A recent report said the bank was planning to open a branch in the West Bank town of Jericho, which is expected to house major segment of the Palestinian self-rule authority envisaged under the Israel-PLO accord.

Departures to go through QAIA building No. 2

AMMAN (Petra) — Refurbishing of the Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) Building Number One has temporarily caused the transfer of all flight departures to Building Number Two, according to the Civil

Aviation Authority (CAA) Saturday. A CAA spokesman said granite tiles are being installed the floor of the Building Number One departures section. The project should be completed in a month.



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Saturday meets with visiting Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Adamishin (Petra photo)

Majali, visiting Russian envoy review Mideast developments

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Saturday met with visiting Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Adamishin and his accompanying delegation and reviewed with them the latest developments in the region and Jordan's role in supporting the Palestinians' efforts to regain their national rights.

Referring to the world economic conference due to convene next month, the prime minister said Jordan hopes that

it would acquire sufficient international assistance to help the country shoulder the burdens that resulted from the forced migrations and the consequences of the Palestine issue.

He added that the government is determined to continue coordination with the Palestinian side to the Middle East peace process.

In reviewing Russian-Jordanian relations, Dr. Majali called for the implementation of mutual agreements.

Mr. Adamishin voiced his country's support for the Jordanian role in the Middle East and called for a higher level of coordination between Russia and Jordan and continued closer cooperation in all fields.

The Russian envoy earlier met with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Sataan Al Hassan to discuss the Middle East peace process and stated afterwards that Jordan and Russia hold similar views with regard to the peace talks.

400 Dutch tour operators convene first ever annual meeting in Arab city

AMMAN (J.T.) — About 400 members of ANVR, an association of Dutch tour operators Saturday opened its annual conference in Amman, the first ever to be held in an Arab city.

Addressing a related press conference at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel, Ministry of Tourism Secretary General Nasri Atallah welcomed the Dutch group and wished them a successful conference said he hoped that the participants will formulate plans to boost tourism between the Netherlands and Jordan.

Mr. Atallah reviewed the numbers of Dutch visitors to the Kingdom since 1989, saying that in 1989, 3549 Dutch tourists came to Jordan, but in 1990 and 1991 "the figures dropped to 2,734 and 1,555. But in 1992, Dutch visitors to the Kingdom numbered 2,711, he said.

He blamed the Gulf crisis for the decline in the number of tourists coming to the Kingdom.

According to an official from Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national carrier, which helped in arranging for the conference in Amman, said that the convening of such a conference in Amman should boost Dutch tourism to the country.

He said that RJ provided two chartered planes to transport the 400 delegates to Amman.

RJ and the Ministry of Tourism have prepared a full programme for the delegates to



Ministry of Tourism Secretary General Nasri Atallah (centre), flanked by officials of ANVR, an association of Dutch tour operators, Saturday addresses a press conference on the opening day of the

annual meeting of Dutch tour operators. The meeting is being convened in Amman at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel (Petra photo)

visit the southern regions of Jordan and the tourist and archaeological sites following three-days of meetings in Amman.

Samir Sabanech, an RJ representative at the press conference, said the airline was ready to augment its air transport cooperation with the Netherlands in order to bring more tourist groups to the Kingdom.

RJ and the Ministry of Tourism are preparing for joint participation in a tourism expo to be held in the Netherlands in November this year, said Mr. Sabanech.

The head of the Dutch tour operators group addressed the press conference saying that the decision to hold the annual conference in Amman came as a result of a careful study

which took into consideration the country's recognised political stability and security.

The 400 delegates represent 250 tourist offices in the Netherlands as well as major hotels and airlines.

The Jordan News Agency, (Petra), said that one of the topics to be discussed is how to develop Dutch-Jordanian tourism cooperation.

Yeltsin confident

(Continued from page 1)

threatened. The protesters then hid their weapons, including a few dozen AK-47 rifles and some Molotov cocktails.

Despite his order, Mr. Yeltsin has said he will not resort to violence.

"The situation is calm, that's the main thing," he said in the TV interview from his Kremlin office. "There's clear authority now, and that authority is working."

Mr. Rutskoi walked through the crowd outside the White House with a megaphone, denouncing Mr. Yeltsin's actions as unconstitutional and proclaiming himself the legitimate leader. Demonstrators cheered, "Rutskoi is president."

The parliament's defense minister, Vyacheslav Achalov, told the lawmakers that he was forming paramilitary units to defend the building. He said volunteers were arriving Saturday from as far as Siberia.

The actual strength of Mr. Achalov's force, however, was questionable. The Interfax news agency said there was no sign of troops moving towards Moscow.

Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, who has blasted Mr. Yeltsin's actions as unconstitutional, said at a news conference in Moscow that both sides in Russia's power struggle are to blame for the crisis.

He said the country "must get back on a constitutional path" by holding simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections, "the sooner the better." Mr. Gorbachev said scorning the constitution is "Bolshhevism."

Meanwhile, Mr. Yeltsin's constitutional convention was meeting in the Kremlin. His chief of staff, Sergei Filatov, said the convention should finish drafting a new national charter by Dec. 12, the date Mr. Yeltsin has set for parliamentary elections.

Mr. Khasbulatov blasted Mr. Yeltsin's administration as a shameful "junta" and asserted there was no more room for compromise with an "ex-president" that he called "a sick man who is unable to stay his head or his hand."

Mr. Khasbulatov's reference to the regions where parliament could be located hit upon the issue of how much support Mr. Yeltsin can expect in the days and weeks to come from the Russian hinterland, the ultimate key to victory or defeat in any political struggle.

A key parliamentary defector who has become an important ally for Mr. Yeltsin, Nikolai Ryabov, on Saturday admitted that the president could be forced to backtrack on his opposition to holding simultaneous presidential and legislative elections.

In other developments Saturday, state law enforcement agencies issued a warning that armed paramilitaries in the parliament were preparing an assault operation against the municipal headquarters.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Yemen

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable of good wishes to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh on his country's 26th anniversary of its revolution. He wished the president continued health and happiness and further progress for the Yemeni people.

Princess Basma to open birth spacing workshop

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday will open a two-day workshop at Amra Hotel dealing with birth spacing. The focus will be the review of a national health programme on this issue prepared this year by the National Population Commission. Several working papers to be discussed at the workshop will deal with safe motherhood, population growth and other related issues.

Karaki returns from Yemen

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief of the Royal Court Khaled Karaki returned to Amman Saturday evening following a short trip to Yemen where he delivered a message from His Majesty King Hussein to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The Yemeni president said he valued King Hussein's efforts and national stand and his keenness on bolstering Yemeni-Jordanian relations. Mr. Karaki later met with Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beid and gave him another message from King Hussein.

Authorities shut down restaurants in Zarqa

ZARQA (Petra) — Several restaurants, bakeries, and chocolate factories were closed by the local public safety committee here because their owners ignored health safety requirements. Deputy Governor of Zarqa Qasem Bani Hani said the committee will pursue its inspection campaign to penalise violators of safety regulations.

U.S. warns

(Continued from page 1)

on both sides of the border," the official said.

"But Mr. Rabin had doubts about Syrian seriousness, citing the response of Assad to the Israeli-PLO agreement, and he actually told Egypt not to speed things up," he said, according to Maariv.

The official said Mr. Rabin, "gave Mubarak a feeling" that he preferred to postpone an agreement with Syria and concentrate on implementing the PLO accord, partly because "he faced political difficulties at home in selling an agreement with Syria that involved territorial concessions."

Mr. McCurry meanwhile also acknowledged the apparent reluctance of some countries to attend an Oct. 1 conference in Washington aimed at raising money to implement the Israel-PLO agreement.

Some of the countries were still deciding whether to come to the meeting because the United States has made it clear that participation in the conference is linked to contributing to a Middle East fund, Mr. McCurry said.

Mr. Christopher and Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen invited foreign and finance ministers from Europe, the Middle East including the Gulf states, Japan and elsewhere.

Somalis down helicopter

(Continued from page 1)

mission into U.N. entanglement in Somalia's clan warfare.

At the White House, Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers condemned Saturday's attack, saying it "underscores the need to reestablish security in Mogadishu to prevent the international humanitarian efforts from being undermined."

"Today, Somalia is on the road to recovery... we must not allow this substantial yet fragile progress to be threatened by the brutality of warlords who would profit from the suffering of others and thwart the will of the overwhelming majority of Somalis who seek peace and reconciliation."

Maj. Stockwell said the latest attack would not deter U.N. troops from their mission to rebuild Somalia.

"We will not shirk from our duty and we will continue operations in Mogadishu," he told a news briefing in Mogadishu.

Meanwhile a journalist said he had narrowly escaped being kidnapped by Somali gunmen who let him go because he was Italian.

WHAT'S ON EXHIBITIONS

★ Art exhibition of old and new paintings from private collections by Samia Zaru at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ The First International Festival of Fine Arts in Jordan entitled "Colour and Light in the Nabatean Civilisation" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Jordan.

★ Art exhibition of paintings on Petra by British artist Caroline Dobson at the British Council.

★ Iraqi Art Festival at the Alia Art Gallery

★ Exhibition of paintings and photographic pictures of old Baghdad by Nadim Mubashir at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Permanent exhibition of 58 artists and "Chair" Exhibition at Darat Al Funnun of the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh (10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Fridays 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.) Tel. 643251-2

Agriculture specialists to assess regional project

AMMAN (J.T.) — Delegates from Jordan and five other Near Eastern countries will gather in Amman Monday for the Fourth Technical Regional Meeting to discuss progress on a feed and livestock improvement project.

A total of 25 agriculture specialists representing Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Tunisia, Cyprus and Turkey will review the results of the implementation of Al Mashreq project thus far, particularly in the 1992/93 agricultural season.

Al Mashreq project is a regional scheme aimed at improving the cultivation of barley and forage (used for horses and cattle) and the quality of livestock particularly sheep, in Syria, Jordan and Iraq.

The project focuses on transferring the available technologies at the national programme to farmers.

It is financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD).

Four of the five-years of the project have lapsed and the delegates will review their results, according to a spokesperson for the Amman office of the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) which is hosting the three-day meeting in Amman. ICARDA said that the discussion will also cover training of personnel employed in the implementation of the project and will look into the prospect of extending the scheme for another five-year period.

Special attention during the meeting will be given to the preparation of a plan for production of cereals in Syria, Jordan and Iraq.

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STYLE: Newly Built, American Style. 700 M2 Area.

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Only those who are seriously interested please contact Hakim at telephone number 694691 ext. 104 between the hours of 9:00 Am and 5:00 pm Saturday through Wednesday except for Thursday till 3:00 P.M.

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
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A vital seat for who?

THE ARAB League's decision to seek a permanent Arab seat at the U.N. Security Council during the current session of the U.N. General Assembly is a legitimate demand now when there is an international call for the reformation of the council, including the expansion of its composition. There are already several key candidates for such a privileged seat should this most important U.N. body reassess its role after the major changes that occurred in the international and regional arenas since the end of World War II. There is an increasing awareness across the board that the present membership of the council is a relic of a past era long overtaken by contemporary events and changes. Japan, Germany, Brazil and India are now the prime candidates for permanent membership, on par with other major powers.

The Arab World, representing 22 states and some 200,000,000 people, obviously deserves a continuous membership in the main U.N. body that deals with regional and international security. Yet, there are major obstacles in the face of this Arab request. For one thing, the Arab World is no longer politically homogenous by any stretch of the imagination. The Arab countries are as independent of each other as any other countries can be. All semblances of unity and commonality of interests and objectives has given way to absolute sovereignty perceptions on the part of most if not all the Arab states with the exception of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries which still maintain a facade of unity and solidarity. This sad state of Arab affairs, especially in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis and the ensuing war, has finished off all claims of Arab nationalism, the mainstay of Arab affairs in the wake of World War I and World War II.

The Arab cause in this context is undermined by realities on the ground that need to be fundamentally amended in order to give it credence. Three long years have passed since the Gulf conflict and still many Arab capitals are not even on talking terms with each other. This Arab situation has got to change and change fast, if the Arab League decides to push for an Arab permanent seat during this session of the General Assembly. Nothing short of an Arab summit would do the job.

One second hurdle is the question of which state should represent the Arab countries. This is indeed a formidable problem since we do not think that one particular state should permanently take up the seat of the Arab World on the council. The Arab League may be thinking in terms of selecting Egypt for this seat, since it is the most populous and enjoys a high profile on the international scene. A more sensible and equitable Arab representation formula, however, needs to be devised, if indeed the world body agrees to grant a seat to the Arabs. It could be something based on a regional rotation or on assigning this seat to the Arab League after it undergoes a thorough overhaul in order to become more viable, functional and efficient.

The European Community (EC) is entertaining such an idea for itself as a substitute for several European capitals representations. Whether the Arab countries opt for this or other scheme, the central issue would remain the need to avoid the predominance of one Arab country over the others.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

DURING COMMUNIST rule in the Soviet Union, the Soviet people had yearned for democracy and bread, four years after overthrowing communism, the same people have discovered that they have no democracy, no bread and no dignity, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. It seems that the internal enemies of the people are more dangerous than the external enemies of the country and it seems that the enemies of democracy are being applauded by the West which gloats over the current difficult situation in Russia, said the paper. The Western nations support Mr. Yeltsin in his crackdown on democracy and in dissolving parliament and back his policies which have left Russia a victim of political and social corruption and poor, it continued. The paper said that the West has been promising the Russian people, pledging to provide them with chips, jeans, hamburgers and songs, among other things, but the situation remains unchanged in Russia. The victory achieved by Mr. Yeltsin over the parliament of his country is in fact a victory for the U.S. and Britain and their old colonial dreams but how long would this victory last, asked the paper. The paper expressed fear that the present situation would lead to a civil war in Russia, a war orchestrated and directed by the Western nations.

THE PLO has no right to deny any move on the part of any Arab country to normalise its relations with Israel and has no right to demand that Arab countries do not contact Israel before a comprehensive peace has been achieved, said Al Jallah Al Khattib, a columnist in Al Dustour. The PLO has no right to stop any Arab state from moving towards Israel simply because the organisation itself took the first step for the rest of the Arab countries to follow, said the writer. If indeed the PLO wants to see a comprehensive peace, it should not have concluded the Gaza-Jericho first agreement with the Israel, said the writer.

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Jordan debts decline as austerity measures pay off

The central government budgets over the last two decades have shown fresh borrowing in excess of debt repayments. It is only logical to expect foreign indebtedness to rise steadily from one year to another. How come then that Jordan's outstanding indebtedness fell during 1992 and 1993 down to \$6.5 billion?

Several factors contributed to this pleasant outcome. Those factors are:

1) The cancellation of major military hardware purchase contracts, such as the Mirage and Tornado aircraft. The financial commitments to these purchases were part of Jordan's external indebtedness. The decision to cancel reduced the commitments by roughly one billion dollars.
2) Jordan bought back the huge commitment towards the Soviet Union at a cash discount of around 82.5 per cent. The nominal value of that debt was \$750 million. It was written off against a payment of \$80 million and commodity exports of \$52 million.

3) The payment on time of instalments due on loans that are not subject to rescheduling, such as loans related to the IMF, the World Bank, Arab funds and all new debts made after the cut-off date of March 31, 1989.

4) The buy-back deals made in the secondary market, where the Jordanian treasury was active in buying back its own commitments at a discount of around 62 per cent. Jordan was paying 38 cents for the dollar. Around \$450 million of commercial debts were paid off.

The latest framework agreement reached with London Club of commercial creditors will allow Jordan to buy back more debts at a discount of 61 per cent, to the tune of \$50 million, but not exceeding \$75 million. The \$50 million mentioned above will thus be sufficient to buy back \$128 million of nominal debt, which will further reduce the outstanding indebtedness without jeopardising the currently adequate reserves of the Central Bank.

Those reserves did decline a little bit from the peak reached in 1992, but they are still within the reasonable level and could be considered excellent when we take the reduction of

indebtedness at the expense of reserves into account.

In this respect, I would like to break the news that the latest reestimate of the figures of the 1993 budget showed a net repayment of debt for the first time in Jordan's history. The deficit before financing section of the budget will be lower than the deficit after financing. This means that repayment during 1993 will exceed drawings on fresh credit if the London Club agreement is signed and implemented before the end of 1993.

The importance of this pleasant fact is that the Jordanian treasury reached a stage where its revenues are enough to cover its expenditures. Borrowing is no more needed to finance current expenditure but only to offset the burden of servicing old debts.

This achievement indicates that the austerity programme, the prudent fiscal policies, the sacrifices made by the Jordanian people and accepting a higher tax burden and a lower standard of living finally paid off and gave fruits.

There is no easy way to achieve financial self-sufficiency. Reducing the tax burden does not create an independent country and a proud people.

A word of warning is warranted: Most of the factors that helped reduce debts are not sustainable and may not recur in the coming years. On the other hand, the outstanding debts of Jordan, although small in absolute terms, are huge in relation to a small economy of \$4.2 billion of gross domestic product (GDP).

Our officials bragged so much about the debt reduction, which we obtained from London Club, that the international community came under the false impression that Jordan needs no more. In this respect, we should point out the fact that the gross debt due to London Club is no more than \$750 million, or 12 per cent only of Jordan's gross indebtedness. The balance represents state-to-state debt now under Paris Club.

Without a substantial relief of Jordan's debts, the Jordanian economy will not be able to take off, the standard of living will not improve considerably and the talked-about prosperity under peace will remain a myth.



The Christian Science Monitor.
Los Angeles Times Syndicate.

Stereotypes that are and should no longer be

By David K. Shipley

WASHINGTON — Now that the Israelis and the Palestinians have finally given each other official recognition, they are free to search for human recognition, the more elusive acceptance that comes from destroying old myths and facing truths long denied.

This will be hard, for it means cutting through a thick web of stereotypes and acknowledging that each has been the other's victim.

The difficulty and the hope are symbolised by a little-known episode in the early military career of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

In 1948, as commander of the Harel Brigade, Mr. Rabin expelled to the West Bank all 50,000 Palestinian Arabs from the towns of Lod and Ramle, near Tel Aviv. Those from Lod (including the family of Georges Habash, who became head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) were forced to walk 16 to 24 kilometres in the summer heat, and those from Ramle were taken by bus.

It was "a harsh and cruel action," Mr. Rabin conceded in the manuscript of his 1979 memoirs, but essential, he felt. "Clearly, we could not leave Lod's hostile and armed populace in our rear."

Mr. Rabin's five-paragraph description of the incident was deleted from his book by an Israeli censorship committee, because it would have tarnished Israel's heroic version of history.

It would have violated Israelis' cherished fiction that the Palestinian refugee problem had been created solely by Arab leaders who urged people to flee and it would have

bolstered the Palestinians' fiction that all those who left were driven out by Israeli troops.

The reality, as revealed in Israeli documents declassified several years ago, was a mixture of expulsion and flight, a complex truth that neither side has been willing to incorporate into its picture of the past. Perhaps history can be faced more honestly now. But it will take some time for Israelis and Palestinians to revise their definitions of themselves as victims with no guilt for each other's suffering.

That shift must come at some point on the way to authentic peace.

The Arab-Israeli conflict has existed in two dimensions: Israel versus the Arab states, and Jewish nationalism versus Palestinian nationalism. The latter conflict has been burdened by a special psychology, and is addressed in the agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation: Eventually the peace accord may reconcile not only the competition of two national movements for the same piece of land, but also the deeper struggle in which each people's identity has relied on the negation of the other's.

Resolving that struggle will be more challenging than drawing boundaries and sharing power. Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs are majorities and minorities at the same time. The Jews rule Israel, but throughout history they have been a persecuted and marginalised minority and a tiny presence on the rim of the Arab World.

The Palestinians are part of the huge Arab majority in the Middle East, but they are nevertheless a minority among the Arabs, often vilified and rejected and persecuted, as in

Kuwait after the Gulf war. And they are the minority in the lands controlled by Israel.

On each side, images and caricatures of the other have been taught to children by parents and teachers, codified in textbooks, embellished in literature, popularised in slang. A whole set of stereotypes may prove as resistant to change as biases have been in other multi-ethnic societies.

To many Israeli Jews, the Arab is dirty, lazy, thieving, stupid (but wily), primitive (but exotic) and sexually aggressive. To many Palestinian Arabs, the Jew is greedy, cold, conspiratorial, wickedly clever, arrogant (but superior), alien (but advanced) and sexually permissive.

Peace or no peace, such attitudes will be hard to dislodge. But another cluster of biases is susceptible to revision if the promise of peaceful coexistence develops. These are the symmetrical images generated by years of war and terrorism: Arabs and Jews tend to see each other as violent, cruel, bloodthirsty, callous and cowardly. According to a survey the year after the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, Israelis viewed Egyptians as markedly less violent than other Arabs.

Reaching across the barriers to acknowledge suffering is a gesture with immense power, even when the hardships are not at all parallel.

Political figures on both sides can learn from an episode last January, when 16 Jewish-American and Palestinian-American women, leaders of Jewish or Arab organisations who had been holding dialogues for several years, visited Israel and the occupied territories together.

The schedule called for a day trip to Gaza followed by a visit

to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem. Several Palestinians did not wish to see Yad Vashem, arguing that they already knew about the Holocaust, that they were not responsible for it and that it had been used as a tool against them, according to Reena Bernards, one of the group's coordinators. One Palestinian woman insisted that the horrible images would disturb her sleep and she refused to put herself through the experience.

The Jewish women were upset, and Yad Vashem stayed on the agenda, with everyone free to go or not as she chose. In Gaza the women were guided through the twisting alleys of the Beach Refugee Camp to a three-room house with a concrete floor, home to a family of 17. In one room, where seven people slept, bedding was carefully folded each morning and placed in the closet.

"People were very moved by the whole experience in Gaza," Reena Bernards recalls, and the Palestinian women were touched by Jews' willingness to go out of their way to see suffering.

Everyone was asked to write her reflections briefly, then read them aloud to the group that evening. A politically conservative Jewish woman expressed her compassion for the Gazans living in squalor who neatly folded their bedding as a way to maintain their dignity. She said no one should have to live like that.

The last to speak was the Palestinian who had not wanted to lose sleep over the images in the Holocaust museum: "The only thing I want to say is that I will go to Yad Vashem."

And she did, along with the others — The New York Times.

ICRC welcomes PLO-Israeli deal, pledges further assistance

THE International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) welcomes the Declaration of Principles signed by Israel and the PLO on Sept. 13 and is hopeful that these events will contribute towards peace in the region. The institution hopes in particular that the implementation of this Declaration of Principles will solve humanitarian problems caused by 26 years of military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In the meantime, the ICRC will continue to carry out its conventional activities as it has done since 1967. It is also closely following the discussions between the parties and maintaining contacts with them in order to be able to clarify as soon as possible certain questions linked directly with the humanitarian activities which it carries out under its mandate.

During the five-year transitional period laid down in the declaration, the ICRC will extend its role as an independent humanitarian organisation whose mandate is defined by the Geneva Conventions and the statutes of the movement, and will also remain at the disposal of all the parties concerned in order to act as a neutral intermediary.

The main tasks of the ICRC delegation in Israel and the occupied territories are to monitor respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention and to provide protection for and assistance to the victims of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Activities for detainees

ICRC delegates regularly visit more than 40 places of detention, mainly prisons, military detention centres, police stations and temporary or transit detention centres both in Israel and the occupied territories. They observe the material and psychological conditions of detention and the treatment accorded to detainees. After these visits the ICRC produces for the authorities oral and written reports on the delegates' findings. It also provides detainees with material assistance.

Activities for the civilian population

A major concern of the ICRC is the protection of the civilian population and their property. When necessary, it provides material assistance and takes appropriate steps with the relevant authorities.

Medical assistance

ICRC medical personnel monitor health care services in places of detention and compile data on the overall health situation in the occupied territories.

Tracing

The tracing agency collects information on the whereabouts of detainees, which it obtains mainly from notification by the detaining authorities and also by means of registration cards filled in by the detainees themselves during ICRC visits. It then lets families know as quickly as possible where their relatives are being detained. Furthermore, the tracing agency handles tracing requests and facilitates the exchange of news between detainees and civilians in the occupied territories and their families who live in Arab countries.

Dissemination

The ICRC has initiated programmes to promote, develop and disseminate international humanitarian law, knowledge of the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and the principles guided by it both in Israel and for the Palestinian community.

Given the importance of dissemination, the institution has taken the decision to expand its activities in this field.

Cooperation with national societies

Norwegian Red Cross

Following an agreement signed in August 1992 between the Norwegian Red Cross and the ICRC, the former assumed the responsibility for organising and financing the family visit programme for one year as from Sept. 1. In August 1993, the agreement was extended for another year.

Since 1968, the family visit programme has enabled detainees from the occupied territories to receive visits from

their relatives in their place of detention. This programme is currently being carried out by a delegate from NORCROSS who works in cooperation with the Central Committee of Red Crescent Societies in the West Bank and Gaza (CCRCS).

Netherlands Red Cross

Following an extensive survey which revealed that private hospitals in the occupied territories were having serious difficulty in covering their running costs, the Netherlands Red Cross, in cooperation with the ICRC, proposed to the European Community to repeat a project through which \$6 million had been distributed in 1991. The proposal was accepted in early 1993 and the Netherlands Red Cross is in the process of implementing it.

As of Sept. 15, 1993, 32 expatriates, including one representative of the Norwegian Red Cross and one representative of the Netherlands Red Cross, were working in the ICRC delegation in Israel and the occupied territories. From its three main offices (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Gaza) and eleven local offices, the ICRC has immediate access to victims and contact with the authorities and representatives of the various communities.

Future cooperation with the Red Crescent societies

In view of the new circumstances, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement must make a particular effort to respond in an effective and coordinated way to needs of the different components of the Red Crescent in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

"The ICRC delegation will increase its assistance to the Red Crescent structures within the Gaza Strip and West Bank in identifying projects which will help to develop the operational capacity of the Red Crescent."

Article 7 of the agreement between the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of October 1989 states that "in accordance with the movement's statutes, the development of national societies shall fall within the competence of the league."

As long as the situation remains as it is, the ICRC shall assume the general direction of the international Red Cross and Red Crescent action, by virtue of its role of a specifically neutral and independent institution and intermediary as it is outlined in Article 18 of the agreement between the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of October 1989.

However, in order to act in the most effective way possible the ICRC and the international federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are in close contact in order to coordinate the development of the Red Crescent Societies in the occupied territories.

The ICRC delegation for its part will increase its assistance to the Red Crescent structures within the Gaza Strip and West Bank in identifying projects which will help to develop the operational capacity of the Red Crescent in traditional fields such as first aid and ambulance services, as well as dissemination. The ICRC and the federation will further assess the contributions they will make to the development of the CCRCS, its structures and programmes. Particular attention will be paid to the vital links between the different components of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and the Red Crescent structures within the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

The ICRC is willing to study with the national societies the various other possibilities of cooperation, so that future projects can be carried out under its direction.

The ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are planning to hold an information meeting for national societies in the near future.

No hiding place for Palestinian collaborators

By Sarah Helm

FAHMEH — "We are like cats in a cage if we can find any opening — however small — we will jump out to save our lives." These are the words of Ahmad Hamarsheh, the Palestinian mukhtar or headman of Fahme, a "collaborator village" guarded by Israeli soldiers in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Mr. Hamarsheh is frightened — terrified — by the prospect of peace. He knows that peace means he may be called to account by his fellow Palestinians for all the years of betrayal. He, and others like him, could be put on trial before a Palestinian judge for war crimes, as some Palestinians are already demanding. Or he could be simply abandoned to await an assassin's bullet. Mr. Hamarsheh has little hope of a Palestinian "amnesty." He hopes his Israeli masters will save him — but he is not sure that they will.

"We are outraged that we are being ignored and neglected. The agreement doesn't mention us. Maybe there is a

secret clause which we don't know about. But we are demanding our case is taken into account," he said, referring to the Rabin-Arafat accord, which sets out terms for Palestinian autonomy, but makes no mention of what will happen to collaborators.

Fahme is one of two "collaborator villages" — the other is Gaza — where Palestinians aiding Israel have fled for their own protection. The shabby collection of houses, on an old Jordanian army base near Jenin, is one of the stranger sears of the occupation: a monument to Israel's success in infiltrating and dividing Palestinian society.

The village services are paid for by Israel, its occupants work in Israel and are armed and trained by the Israeli army. Many were born and raised in Palestinian villages within a 10-mile radius. Reviled by their own people, they can never go home. But when Palestinian autonomy comes into force, they know they cannot stay in Fahme.

Like any occupying power, Israel, since it seized the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, has relied on a vast network of collaborators, quislings and informers to manipulate a hostile population. There are believed to be 18,000 collaborators on the Israeli payroll, of whom about 1,000, including families, have fled to Fahme. What will happen to their files when the Israelis withdraw, they wonder. Well-known collaborators, outside in the community, have started taking out advertisements in the Arab press, praising Mr. Arafat in an attempt to clear their names.

In Fahme, people are determined to stand "united." But they ask when the Palestinian police take control. "It could be a bloodbath," says Mr. Hamarsheh. What will happen to their guns if Israel abandons them? More than 1,000 collaborators have been killed since the start of the intifada, and even if the Palestine Liberation Organisation offers an amnesty, there are

opposition factions who will seek to exact their own revenge.

"I have had calls from hundreds of collaborators since the agreement, all wanting to have answers," said Mr. Hamarsheh, who runs a "collaborator help-line" from his small home, picking up the telephone and slipping into Hebrew. "I have to tell the Israelis who my visitors are," he explains with a wry smile.

"There are many who want to come here now — particularly from Gaza and Jericho," he goes on, referring to the two areas from which Israel is to withdraw first. "But we don't have any more room."

All types of "collaborators" are represented in Fahme. There are those like Mr. Hamarsheh who worked "with" rather than "against" the Israeli authorities. He was a stooge mayor in Ya'abed, five miles from Fahme. He was friendly with the local Israeli military commander and made his money building Jewish settlements in the West

Bank. Ejected from the village in 1989, Mr. Hamarsheh shot dead a cousin in a gun battle.

There are many collaborators in Fahme who provided information in return for favours — a relative released from jail, a permit for travel or money. There are collaborators, who were recruited in prison, sometimes under torture. And there are the most notorious collaborators of all: Those who travel with Israeli undercover units to identifying "wanted" Palestinians before they are arrested or shot.

Samir Sabri, 25, says he became a collaborator after he was tortured by Palestinian gunmen "because they thought I was too rich. I had business in Israel. I had a lot of land. I liked Israelis."

And the people of Fahme have little desire to go back to their homes. Mr. Sabri says: "I feel Israel now, not Palestinian. After I was tortured they gave me a blood transfusion in an Israeli hospital. Now I have Jewish blood."

The price of freedom

Following is a translation of an article that appeared in the Sept. 24, 1993, issue of the Arabic daily *Al Ra'i*.

By Fahed Al Fanek

The government's selection of its advisors is a recognition of their experience and ability to give advice in their fields of specialisation, to help the government take decisions and formulate policies, designed to serve the public interest.

With this in mind, the government should be pleased when such experts enlighten the public opinion through their participation in symposia, conferences, lectures and writing in the newspapers. It

should also encourage them to do that as part of their duty towards the government and society, instead of banning them from writing.

Why, then, did the government decide to silence its employees, and particularly its advisors and prevent them from writing? The answer is that the government did not appoint such advisors out of its desire to benefit from their experience and advice, but because it wants to contain them and avoid any harm that might be caused by them, or because it does not trust their ability to run departments or executive institutions.

Since regulations regarding the civil servants do not allow

the government to fire them, it appoints them as advisors, but does not consult them, thus evading any harm caused by their assumption of executive offices.

It is quite apparent that the prime minister's communique was targeted, in particular, at the government's official advisors. The first victim of the prime minister's communique is Khaled Mahadin, an advisor at the prime ministry, the second is Mouna Shukair, an advisor at the ministry of Higher Education, and the third is Samir Habashneh, an advisor at the Youth Ministry. A fourth victim is Munis Razzaq, an advisor at the Ministry of

Culture. All these people are first class writers. The government does not trust them and is not happy with their political ideologies and ideas, thus attempting to silence them.

Here arises the following question: Why is the government retaining these advisors and paying their salaries, asking them to do nothing, except observing office hours and refraining from any productive work beyond office hours.

A second question is why do these advisors accept to take such positions, which aim at isolating them from their departments and the public opinion, and why do they accept salaries which do not serve any

purpose, except to give the government more power over them.

The government is asked to act in line with the democratic atmosphere prevailing in the country and to give its staff the freedom to write in their areas of specialisation as long as it allowed them to affiliate to political parties.

Advisors are also asked to pay the price of their freedoms, by freeing themselves from the slavery of their jobs.

The freedom of criticising the government has a price, the least of which is to keep away from public posts and restrictions and to move to real and genuine work.

Once-thriving Muslim community vanishes from Bosnian town

By Mark Heinrich
Reuters

FOCA, Bosnia — It's futile to look for vestiges of the Muslim community that thrived in Foca for centuries until 17 months ago, when war transformed the south Bosnian town in a matter of weeks.

The only traces are far from here — the diaspora of Foca Muslims represented in almost every refugee centre in former Yugoslavia in not Serb-controlled territory.

Only one Muslim remains today in Foca, a jeweller and "very respected citizen" married to a Serb, town officials say.

They say he has no wish to talk to western journalists — but will not let them look for him on their own.

There was a 16th century mosque, the minaret of which once distinguished the Drina River town until it was demolished in the April 1992 Serb takeover. Asked where the site was and whether journalists could see it, the police minder replied: "I don't know where. But you can't see it."

Reuters obtained rare permission from the breakaway "Serb republic" spanning 70 per cent of old Bosnia, to visit Foca, 120 kilometres south of Sarajevo. The trip was more revealing for what we could not see than for what we could.

A ghostly atmosphere pervades the nondescript hill country. We could walk nowhere without a clutch of town officials and plainclothes police who determined our route.

People stared at us balefully and avoided attempts at conversation. The dusty streets

were virtually devoid of traffic and dingy shops were short of goods and customers.

In early 1992, the 40,500 population of Foca and its surrounding county, bordering the Yugoslav Republic of Montenegro, was 52 per cent Slav Muslim and 45 per cent Serb.

Its mayor was Muslim and his deputy a Serb, mirroring Bosnia's ethnic diversity in the old federal Yugoslavia.

The 550-year-old town was a beacon of Bosnian Islamic culture with several mosques, including the Aladja Džamija with a courtyard and fountain dating from 16th century Ottoman rule, and a Muslim cemetery.

That changed in April 1992 when Bosnian Serbs revolted against a Muslim and Croat vote for independence from Yugoslavia in a referendum which they boycotted.

Rebel Serbs seized Foca days later. Within weeks its Muslim inhabitants were gone. The circumstances of the exodus remain unconfirmed because there were no independent witnesses.

Foca refugees in Muslim-controlled areas of Bosnia or in Croatia say they were rounded up at home by Serb gunmen, dispossessed and expelled on foot or in buses.

Foreign aid workers have been convinced by the uniformity of refugees' accounts as well as the destruction of Muslim homes, shops and all mosques.

They conclude that Foca was one of the first predominantly Muslim regions in Bosnia to be "ethnically cleansed" by Serb conquest.

The Serbs of Foca have a

quite different story.

"The war began when we were attacked by armed Muslims and we found papers showing Muslims in cells of three were assigned to kill respected officials and citizens in a Jihad (holy war) to erase Serbs," said Ljubomir Todovic, deputy mayor before and after the upheaval.

"Six Serb civilians were killed in the first days in what was shaping up as a Serb tragedy," he said in his spartan office, adorned by a framed portrait of a 19th-century Serb Orthodox archbishop.

"But we took up arms and had Foca under control on April 14."

The Muslims left of their own accord," Mr. Todovic said. "They left because of their fanaticism. They realised they could not live together with us after thinking they were some kind of nation above us."

He referred to pre-1992 days as "the Turkish period" and to Muslims as "Turks", a derogatory term used by nationalist Serbs and Croats.

In August, International Red Cross delegates found 50 Muslims in Foca's jail after being repeatedly denied visits — a violation of the Geneva Conventions on the Treatment of Prisoners of War — since the start of Bosnia's conflict.

We were told that Serb militia roamed Foca for a long period after the spring of 1992, sometimes threatening, harassing and shooting at western visitors. We saw none on our visit.

Mr. Todovic said eight Muslim children were being cared for in local hospital after being "abandoned" by their parents.

Our requests to speak to them were refused.

"We have been in touch with the other side to take the children but they have not responded," Mr. Todovic said.

Asked whether he could imagine Muslims returning to Foca when the war was over, he answered: "A kind of harmonious intercommunal life could resume again but most Muslims who took up

arms here would have to be tried as war criminals first."

From a distance, the former Muslim quarter on the hillside looked shattered but we were not allowed to go there.

Across one wall graffiti sprayed in the Serb Cyrillic script read "territory of the black cross" — an apparent reference to one of many Serb militia groups involved in ethnic cleansing.

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Market for personal communicators moving

By Andre Violaz
Agence France Presse

WASHINGTON — The market for personal communicators, the latest innovation in micro-computers, is beginning to move: AT and T dropped the price of its machines and Apple has persuaded several European telecommunications companies to take a look at Newton, its entry in the field.

AT and T's personal communicators, or personal digital assistants as some rival versions are called, are ultra-light computers combined with cordless telephones and sometimes a fax.

They enable travelling employees to be in constant communication with their company's central computer — any time, any place. Often they take the form of a notebook that can be written on with a special pen.

Over the past several months, Tandy, Apple, AST Research, IBM and Compaq have unveiled their version of this new tool for the harried executive. Announcing price cuts of 12 to 28.5 per cent for the U.S. markets, AT and T confirmed that the competition will be tough.

Apple's Newton is selling well — about 10,000 units a month — and orders are accumulating, said John Scully, president of the Cali-

fornia-based computer company. The sales figures, though modest, have been reassuring, especially in light of the ferocious criticism that greeted Newton when it was launched in early August.

Apple has succeeded in attracting some prestigious partners. On launching Newton in Britain Thursday, Apple announced agreements with Alcatel and British Telecom to make use of the personal communicator.

Analysts remain cautious about the future of what is the industry's first innovation since the micro-computer.

According to BIS Strategic Decisions, a U.S. think tank, the takeoff will be slow: 50,000 units sold last year, 120,000 this year, a million in 1996 and four million in the year 2,000. That compares to the 14 million micro computers sold this year.

Businesses are likely to be the initial clients. Polling firms could gain direct access to data gathered, supermarkets could manage inventories more quickly, truckers could stay in contact with clients and drivers.

In the United States, Consolidated Rail Corp. already are using the personal communicators to coordinate the movement of its 60,000 freight cars. Lehman Brothers is planning to equip its brokers on the

American stock exchange with them, reducing the time it takes to make a transaction from 90 seconds to five seconds.

Twenty-five million Americans work outside their offices and 13 million spend at least a quarter of their work-day travelling.

For personal communicators to succeed, the experts say, a number of faults must be corrected:

- Hand-writing translates poorly, and recognition software will not be reliable for three or four years — and probably will never achieve perfect accuracy. One could, however, retrieve the manuscript from memory. For this reason, Compaq and IBM include a detachable keyboard with their machines;
- most communicators are not compatible with fixed central computers;
- prices remain high, up to \$3,000 with options such as electronic cards called PCMCIA, which are used to augment the machines' capabilities. Added to that is the cost of cellular communications and the risk that data will be intercepted.

But the big question is whether consumers, already crammed with information and gadgets, will go for yet another product line.

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Poor nations demand less protectionism, more aid

WASHINGTON (R) — Immersed in their own economic problems, rich nations are turning their backs on the Third World, poor countries said Friday.

Sluggish performance in the industrial world is fuelling protectionist pressures and undermining public support for badly needed financial aid, said deputy ministers from the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) Group of 24 (G-24) developing nations.

In a draft statement, they expressed "serious concern (over) the pervasive intensification of protectionist pressures" in the industrial countries that threatens to deny access to their goods.

"The declining trend in aid flow is being attributed to weakening public support in some of the major donor countries, a preoccupation with domestic problems and concerns about the effectiveness of aid utilisation," they added.

But they said such concerns were based on misconceptions and urged governments and lending agencies to help "improve public understanding of these issues and to help mobilise wider political support... for increased aid flows."

The IMF's Managing Director Michel Camdessus has proposed a new \$40 billion

allocation for lending through 1996. But the G-24 said that figure would meet "only a modest part of the projected demand for reserves."

The deputies plan to present their report to the G-24 finance ministers due to meet Sunday at the IMF headquarters as part of the IMF-World Bank annual meeting.

Adding to Third World problems, a 25 per cent decline in commodities prices since 1990 is hurting many of its members.

On a more positive note, the G-24 hailed continued growth, debt reduction agreements and the return of private capitals in many developing nations.

Still, it pointed out, many are left out of the boom.

Per capita real income in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, is lower than it was more than a decade ago.

While the debt difficulties of the 1980s have been alleviated for a number of middle income nations, including several in Latin America, only 14 of the 57 countries that have rescheduled their official debts over the past decade have resumed normal relations with creditors.

The G-24 therefore urged the Paris Club of creditor nations to provide "substantially

deeper debt reduction than that offered so far to ease the debt burdens of many low-income countries that continue to face severe debt difficulties."

As for the return of private capitals — \$57 billion to Latin America during 1992 alone, they constitute "a sign of the success of the adjustment and reform efforts of these countries," the group said.

But for many others the prospects of attracting private capital flows remain uncertain, underscoring the importance of ensuring enough official financing to meet their needs.

And the group warned that many of the gains attained could vanish in the air unless there is a successful conclusion of the general agreement on tariffs and trade's Uruguay Round, which has been stagnant for seven years now.

"Failure to reach agreement would erode business confidence and undermine outward-oriented reform strategies that are being followed by many developing countries as well as formerly centrally planned economies," it said.

The G-24 was formed 21 years ago and is made up of eight Latin American, eight African and eight Asian nations.

OPEC tries again to salvage weak oil prices

GENEVA (R) — OPEC oil ministers were trying Saturday to patch up their internal differences and come up with a unified output strategy to rescue weak crude oil prices.

Frustrated by a price slide that has chopped the value of their oil by a fifth this year, Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) members have to convince sceptical markets the group is serious about halting the drop.

Weak global demand for oil has kept prices under pressure, but OPEC's own quota-busting — it is pumping around one million barrels per day (b/d) more than its self-assigned output ceiling of 23.6 million b/d — has hardly helped its cause.

As a result, international benchmark Brent crude is trapped below \$16.50 a barrel.

OPEC President Jean Ping of Gabon said the meeting would focus on getting Kuwait back into the group's system of output quotas and ensuring all members adhere to their allocations.

Kuwait, which has demanded preferential treatment as it restores pumping capacity crippled during the Gulf war, refused to accept a quota it considered too low when OPEC last met in June.

Israel hopes to earn \$800 million from selling controlling stakes in banks

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel hopes to raise \$800 million from selling controlling stakes in its two biggest banks, Finance Minister Abraham Shohat has said.

The government was preparing for tenders for about 20 per cent of Bank Hapoalim and Bank Leumi, he said in an interview.

He did not give a date for the sell-off which will cap the Labour government's drive to privatise the banking sector. Bank Hapoalim is Israel's biggest bank ahead of second placed Leumi.

Treasury officials said the Bank of Israel was expected to fix the exact size of the controlling stake in each bank by the end of next month but Mr. Shohat said it would be around 20 per cent.

"Those who will be the owners will be the owners who operate these two banks," Mr. Shohat said. "Each stake" will be around 20 per cent. It is a big

amount of money, around \$400 million," he said.

Officials said the government hoped to complete bank privatisation by 1995.

The government sold 20 per cent of Hapoalim and Leumi this year to a booming stock market hungry for blue chip issues. The offerings were massively over-subscribed.

Mr. Shohat, who has vowed to speed up the sale of state-owned banks and industries, said another 10 per cent of each bank would be offered to the public in November.

That would put 35 per cent of Leumi's shares in public hands and 33 per cent of Hapoalim's shares.

After the controlling stakes were issued the rest of the shares would be offered to the public.

Mr. Shohat said the government had received seven tenders for the sale of the much smaller Bank Mizrahi which

was expected to be completed within two months.

He said the government, which wants to sell off more than 20 companies, hoped to make four billion shekels (\$1.42 billion) in 1994 from privatisation, compared with three billion shekels (\$1 billion) in 1993 and 1.3 billion shekels (\$464 million) in 1992.

These earnings should help cover the projected six-billion-shekel budget deficit next year, he said. The rest of the budget deficit, around \$600 million, would be covered by U.S. loan guarantees, he said.

"Maybe there will be a situation that we will not have to go to sell bonds in the capital market next year, that will be the first time in the history of this country that we are going to cover the deficit, which will be quite small, three per cent (of GDP) by selling banks and companies. This is very important for the market," Mr. Shohat said.

He said Israel had raised all its first \$2 billion tranche of the guarantees this year. The United States has guaranteed \$10 billion over the next five years.

Mr. Shohat said Israel would use all of it.

"There is a big need for foreign exchange because of the growth in the economy and investments in the economy," he pointed out.

He repeated earlier forecasts that real economic growth would dip to four per cent this year from 6.9 per cent last year because of the closure of the occupied territories.

Economists expect annual growth to be slightly above four per cent in 1994 and 1995.

Mr. Shohat said the successful implementation of the PLO-Israel peace accord would also boost growth and investment but he could not give figures.

IMF: Industrial world economic recovery due in coming months

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Economic recovery in industrialised countries is expected to take hold late this year or in early 1994, chief economist for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Michael Mussa has said.

"I think it's important to realise there's upside potential as well as downside risk" for growth, he said at a news conference following the release of the IMF's World Economic Outlook report.

The IMF forecasts overall world output will grow 2.2 per cent in 1993, spurred mainly by developing countries' dynamism, and 3.2 per cent in 1994.

Output in the industrialised world was projected to grow 1.1 per cent in 1993 and 2.2 per cent in 1994, according to the report. Those figures were revised downward 0.6 per cent and 0.7 per cent, respectively, from April estimates.

Mr. Mussa said "clearly there is potential for a stronger

recovery," especially in the United States, where it could reach 4.0 per cent in 1994.

The IMF officially is forecasting 2.6 per cent economic growth next year in the United States, while the government here is predicting 3.0 per cent growth.

Mr. Mussa said that falling U.S. interest rates would probably compensate for the negative short-term effects on growth caused by President Bill Clinton's fiscal 1994 budget deficit reduction plan, approved by Congress in August.

U.S. statisticians recently revised sharply higher U.S. growth for the past three years.

On Japan, Mr. Mussa was decidedly less optimistic. Evidence that recovery was imminent is "difficult to see in much of the recent data," he said. The latest stimulus package and Tuesday's cut in the discount rate were helpful steps, he said.

In Europe, short-term interest rates are likely to drop further, which "will start mutually reinforcing growth across Europe," he said.

Excluding Britain, recovery will be relatively soft, at least in the beginning, he said. On the continent there is "no clear sign the upturn is beginning."

Flemming Larsen, another IMF economist, said that recovery in the Western economies should soon get in synch.

The United States, Britain and Canada were the first to enter recession and began to recover as the remaining industrialised countries started to slide downhill, he explained.

The recession in the second group slowed recovery in the first, he said.

In Europe, governments need to address structural rigidity in dealing with unemployment. Labour needs to be made "relatively cheaper and more productive," he said.

Finally, the greatest threat to world economic growth underlying IMF forecasts for the fifth consecutive year is a failure of the seven-year-old Uruguay round of international trade talks.

Failure of the round, Mr. Mussa warned, would be harmful in the near-term and could boost protectionism.

Spanish cabinet approves restrictive '94 budget

MADRID (R) — The Spanish cabinet Friday approved a restrictive budget for 1994 which cuts spending in areas such as unemployment benefit and aims substantially to curb a huge public deficit.

The budget, cornerstone of the minority Socialist government's bid to tackle Spain's deep economic recession, must be presented to parliament by Sept. 30.

Economy Minister Pedro Solbes told a news conference after the cabinet session the government was aiming for an overall budget deficit in 1994 of 5.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) compared with an expected 7.1 per cent this year.

"We have to reduce the deficit or we will run into financing difficulties," Mr. Solbes said.

He put 1994 economic growth at a conservative estimate of 1.3 per cent against a

negative 0.8 per cent this year, with inflation targeted at 3.5 per cent compared with this year's forecast 4.5 per cent.

The cabinet meeting was held against a background of so far failed government efforts to win trade union and business support for key elements of economic policy.

The administration of Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez has also still not secured guarantees from regional nationalist parties that they will give the parliamentary backing needed to push the budget through congress.

Five hours of grueling top-level talks between government, unions and business leaders Thursday night failed to produce progress towards a proposed "social pact for employment," one of the Socialist administration's main immediate aims.

Ministers and union bosses were still at loggerheads over

government plans on next year's benefits for the unemployed — now more than 22 per cent of the workforce.

Public sector pay and pension talks on a three-year wage deal for the public and private sectors, in which the government wants to keep pay rises down to two points below forecast inflation, have already been postponed to a later date.

"The dynamics of the negotiations are very negative in terms of trying to reach a wage deal," Jose Maria Fidalgo of the communist-dominated Workers' Commissions (CCOO) union told reporters after Thursday's meeting.

Despite union opposition, the budget will include provision for pensions to rise 3.5 per cent, in line with forecast inflation for 1994, and a freeze on public sector wages.

Friday's cabinet also rubber-stamped a draft law on unemployment benefit, making it

subject to income tax and social security contributions and cutting it for those who refused to accept job mobility or had received redundancy pay.

These measures would save the social security budget some 200 billion pesetas (about \$1.5 billion), Mr. Solbes said.

The depth of the deficit problem was underlined Thursday when the government announced figures to August showing the budget 2.4 trillion pesetas (about \$18.5 billion) in the red, 72 per cent worse than the same period of 1992 and one trillion pesetas (\$7.5 billion) more than forecast for the whole of 1993.

The Socialist government, reelected for a fourth term in June general elections but without an overall majority, is also engaged in parallel bargaining with the country's autonomous regions over terms for more fiscal autonomy.

Cuba reforms state farm, sugar sector

HAVANA (R) — Cuba has moved to increase output and efficiency in state agriculture, including sugar cane, by creating smaller cooperative farms and giving them greater financial and management autonomy.

A government statement described the reforms, which included linking state farm workers' earnings directly to productivity, as "important in-

novations." It said they were intended to give farm workers more incentives to exploit land more efficiently.

To help increase food production, small pieces of land not being used by state farms would also be handed over to individual workers and retired people for cultivation.

The latest move followed a disastrous 1992-1993 sugar harvest and falling food produc-

tion which have further squeezed the communist-ruled Caribbean island's scarce resources as it grapples with its worst-ever economic crisis.

The measure formed part of ongoing economic reforms designed to reactivate the stagnated economy by loosening without eliminating — state control.

The statement from the Communist Party Politburo

said new smaller farms, known as "basic cooperative production units," would be created within existing large-scale state holdings producing sugar cane or other crops.

These new farms would remain under state supervision but would have much more autonomy to run their own finances, organise their production and manage their own resources.

Tanzanian state banks to lay off 1,600 employees

DAR ES SALAAM (AFP) — Tanzania's central bank is to lay off 1,000 of its 1,700-strong workforce under a restructuring programme following liberalisation of the financial sector, bank sources have said.

The sources at the Bank of Tanzania said the move was part of efforts of the newly-appointed governor Idris Rashid to institute efficiency and higher productivity following on-going major reforms of the centrally-planned socialist economy.

Mr. Rashid, 45, who was director of computer and ex-

ternal debt at the bank before being appointed managing director of the state-owned National Bank of Commerce in January last year, took over as Bank of Tanzania governor in July.

Among the first staff to be pruned under the retrenchment programme will be drivers, each of whom is expected to be paid at least three million shillings (\$6,600) in retirement.

But senior staff at the level of departmental director have been given up to November this year to retire voluntarily.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Wright Foundation
GENERAL TENDENCIES: Today you have a good chance to wind up what you have already set in motion that requires quick action but be careful that you don't act hasty or impulsively. Stick to your highest standards.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is the morning for you to take stock of how far you have reached in gaining your ambitions and the rest of the day, evening are good for quiet happiness.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A morning when studying and writing whatever will imbue you with more earnestness of purpose and ambition is excellent while later be with a charmer and have a good time.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) In the morning study your property and see what you can do to make it more attractive in appearance, then go out in the world with those you like.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A day to decide upon your own course of personal activities in the future and to start to put them in motion with the aid of good pals.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Consider well your intimate aims and urges and devise a plan of action to bring them right into your lap after which you see ways to solve a business issue.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Whatever you have in mind in growth and greater

awareness of rightness can be made a part of your life, then let a close companion know your decision.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) If you have something of a public nature to perform, do it as early in the day as you possibly can after which you can get into your practical issues.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think about what you can do to get off to some new interest in the morning but later you can have a marvelous time at amusements you usually appreciate.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) The morning can find you deciding the principles under which you wish to live in the future but in the evening be off to some interesting new venture.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Bring into the world of action some indication what those there can do to make your dreams come true, then join with a friendly group at recreations.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is the moment when you need to be of service to others can be satisfied and later you will be able to go out on the town for amusements.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Do that special consideration that your mate likes so much early for then you will later be able to be off to some new interests that can benefit you.

THE BETTER HALF

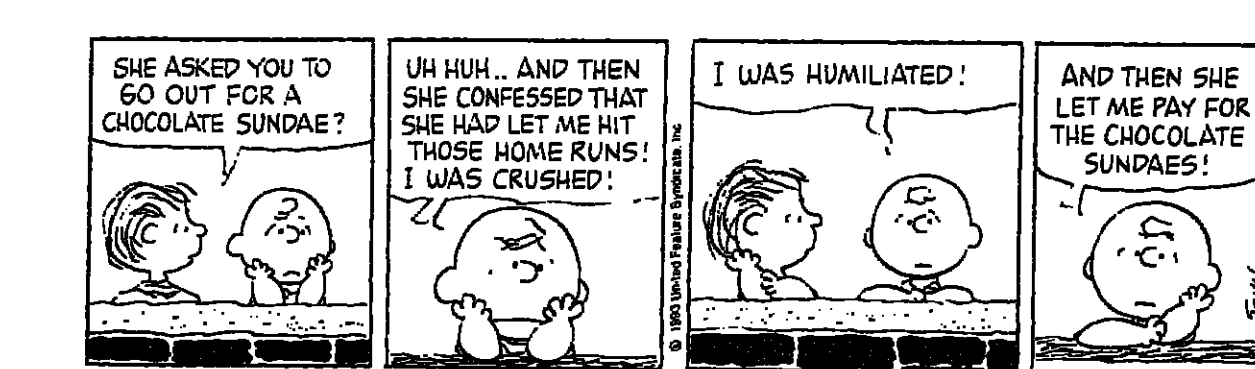
By Glasbergen



"Her kisses are sweeter than wine...but I'm a beer man!"

Peanuts

Andy Capp



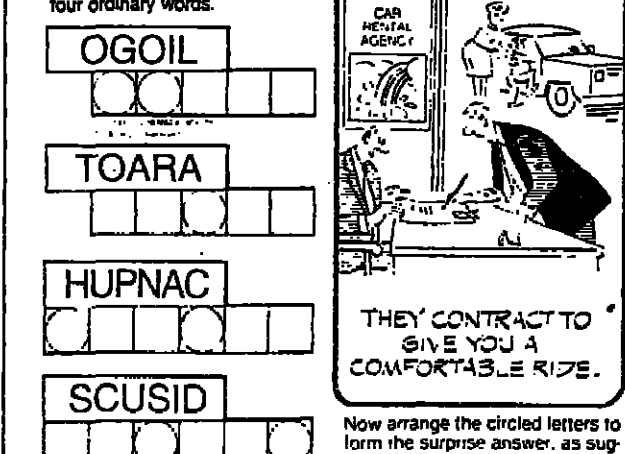
Mutt'n'Jeff



JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

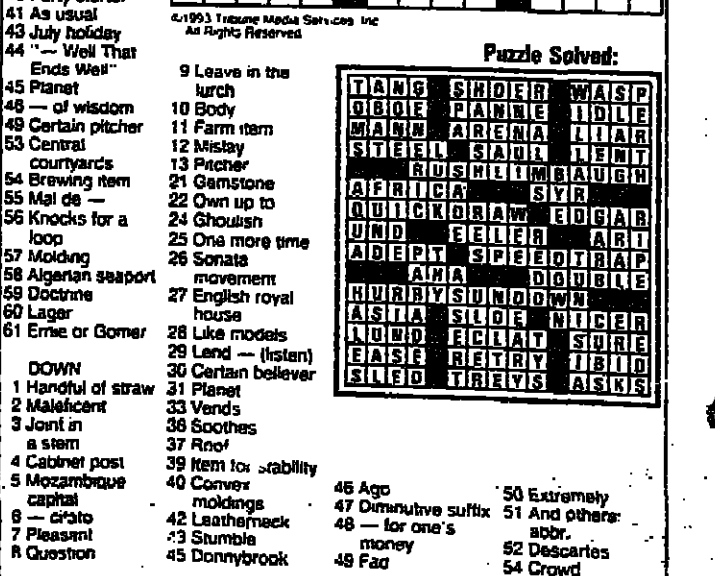
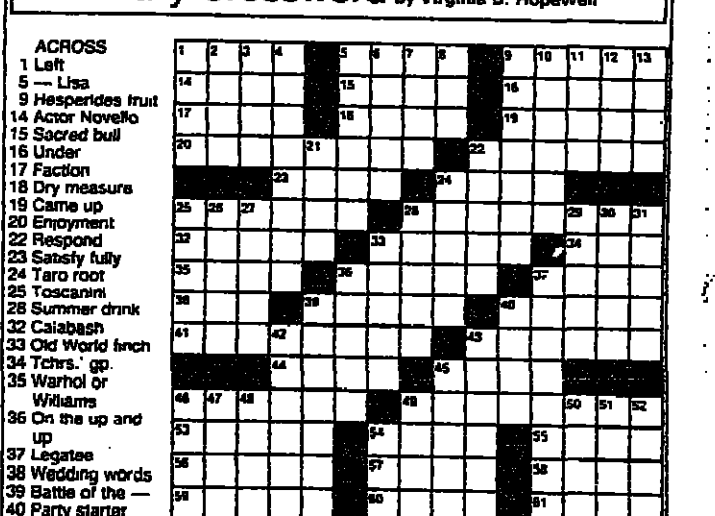
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here:

Samiraj's Jumbles MONTHLY CRIME DEBATE 'N' CITY
Answer: This one's aimed at her instruction
BY ACCIDENT

THE Daily Crossword by Virginia B. Hopewell



Arab Gulf states urged to stay with dollar

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Wealthy Gulf Arab states should keep their currencies tied to the U.S. dollar to find a joint exchange rate and press ahead with a proposed common market, an economic report has said.

The suggestion contradicts growing calls from officials and businessmen in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to de-link their currencies from the greenback after its sharp slide against other major currencies.

Official reports indicate that Arab, mostly GCC, states lost over \$70 billion in overseas assets in 1992 due to sharp fluctuations in interest and currency exchange rates.

In its weekly economic report, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) news agency WAM said GCC monetary authorities had discussed three options to create a regional currency union: The U.S. dollar, a basket of currencies and Special Drawing Rights (SDR) similar to those used by the International Monetary Fund.

"But there should be emphasis on the U.S. dollar since most GCC earnings and payments for imports are in that currency," it said. "What makes this option more important is that the currencies of

most of the GCC's main economic partners, except Japan and the European Community, are pegged to the dollar."

The GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and UAE — have debated a common exchange rate for their currencies for more than five years as a prelude to the regional market. Earlier proposals, including a single currency, were deemed unrealistic.

Only Kuwait's currency, the dinar, is linked to a basket of currencies, in which the U.S. dollar has the lion's share. The

other five currencies are theoretically pegged to the SDR.

"The Gulf states have to find a way out because a common market cannot materialise when their currency exchange rates remain varied," said a UAE banker close to the GCC currency discussions.

"I think the most likely solution will be pegging the six currencies to a basket of currencies, in which the U.S. dollar has a 50 per cent share. Such a basket will cushion losses from currency fluctuation," he explained.

CBJ explains limit on commercial credit, says economy is performing well

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan is seeking to exempt loans for industrial investment from a ceiling on commercial credits imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the central bank of Jordan (CBJ) will have to maintain its regulatory restraints on commercial banks until it succeeds in securing the exemption, a senior official said Saturday.

Jamal Salah, executive director of the research and studies department of the CBJ, also said the bank expects the Kingdom's economy to grow by six per cent in 1993 compared with the 11 per cent registered last year, and hopes to keep inflation under five per cent.

Dr. Salah, who was addressing a two-day seminar on Jordan's economy organised by Economic Perspectives, a local newsletter, said the IMF had imposed a ceiling of JD 400 million for commercial bank loans during this year, JD 335 million for the private sector and the rest for the public sector. But in the first seven months alone, loans to the private sector exceeded JD 360 million, he said. And hence the CBJ was forced to impose tighter measures in the third quarter of the year, he explained.

Ironically, the IMF ceiling is imposed at a time when the commercial banks are enjoying a high level of liquidity, which, logically, should lead to investments in the industrial sector.

Most of the loans extended to the private sector are extended to existing entities and as individual credits and only a small part of the loans is being channelled to industrial investments.

"We are trying to exempt loans extended for industrial investment from the IMF ceiling," he said, adding that until the efforts bear fruit the CBJ would have to keep a tight rein on commercial banks.

At the same time, he said in response to a comment from the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, commercial banks were also not doing enough research and studies to identify industrial projects where they could extend loans.

The IMF ceiling is not the only criteria in the CBJ's move to curtail commercial credits, Dr. Salah said, pointing out that high liquidity in the market would adversely affect efforts to keep inflation under control.

Current CBJ measures in place stipulate that commercial banks could not extend loans exceeding 90 per cent of their deposits and more than 10 times their capital. As such, Dr. Salah, noted most commercial banks are now in the process of increasing their capital.

Furthermore, he said, the central bank also wants to ensure that depositors get "a fair return" from the banks and, implicitly, he criticised what he

described as a trend to widen the gap between interest rates on deposits and loans.

This was not the idea when the Central Bank decided to lift its control on commercial bank interests and let market forces be the guiding factor, he said.

In order to absorb the excess liquidity in the market, the CBJ has started issuing certificates of deposits in local and foreign currency, he noted.

Jordan is making good progress in reducing its burden of foreign debts, which have come down to JD 5,203.1 million from JD 5,516.8 million in 1991, he noted. Consequently, the total debts now stand at 159.8 per cent of the gross domestic product compared with 198.5 per cent in 1991.

"Jordan will continue in 1993 its successful negotiations with various creditors to enable the country to reduce its outstanding debt and debt service obligations while tapping foreign sources of funds to help finance development," he said.

Jordan's external trade expanded considerably in 1992, with imports growing by 29.8 per cent to JD 2,291 million and exports went up by 7.6 per cent to JD 829.3 million when compared with 1991 figures. A decline in Jordan's traditional exports in dollar terms further contributed to widening the trade balance by JD 467.6 million and outweighed the increase in non-traditional exports, Dr. Salah said.

The CBJ official reported a strong performance of the 1993 budget. He said the 1991 budget recorded a surplus (before financing) of JD 12.4 million but the figure went up to a "notable" surplus of JD 144.2 million. This acceleration was mainly due to an acceleration in revenue collection, owing in part of the discretionary measures introduced in the context of the 1992 budget and in part to revenues from certain non-recurring source," he said.

By the end of June 1993, the Kingdom's fiscal budget record a surplus of JD 34.4 million, he revealed.

"The upturn in economic growth which began in the second half of 1991 and accelerated in 1992 is expected to continue in 1993 although at a somewhat slower pace than the rate of 11.3 per cent of last year," Dr. Salah said. "Real GDP is expected to show six per cent growth in 1993."

Based on his assessment on figures provided by the Ministry of Labour, Dr. Salah said unemployment had gone to 15 per cent from the 18.8 per cent registered in 1991 and a further decline to 14 per cent was expected by the end of this year.

Economists say the actual unemployment in the country could be around 25 to 30 per cent. They point out that the Ministry of Labour figures are based on those who register with its employment office and say that almost an equal number do not register with the authorities.

Joint Arab Gulf industrial projects put at \$4.7 billion

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia (AFP) — Gulf Arab states have set up 106 joint industrial projects worth around \$4.7 billion, mostly in chemicals, the Saudi daily Al-Iqtisadiya has reported.

It said 45 projects with investment of around \$3.2 billion were based in Saudi Arabia, 27 projects worth \$726 million in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the rest in the remaining Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members — Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain.

Chemical industries had the lion's share of the investments, receiving more than \$3 billion. The rest covered mining, food and paper.

"Such projects contribute to bolstering industrial and trade

cooperation among member states," the paper quoted a report by the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consultancy (GOIC) as saying.

GOIC, which oversees industrial policies in the GCC, provided no figures for the non-industrial sector but according to the Arab League, total joint GCC ventures are estimated at around \$325 billion with a capital of \$21 billion.

Most GCC states have launched a bid to reduce reliance on unstable oil earnings, which still provide more than 80 per cent of their income despite a sharp decline in crude prices.

But their non-oil industries are still limited to light products.

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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 25/9/1993

| COMPANY'S NAME | TRADING VOLUME | PREV. CLOSING PRICE | OPENING PRICE | CLOSING PRICE |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| AMMAN BANK | 128,000 | 180.000 | 179.500 | 177.000 |
| JORDAN NATIONAL BANK | 29,080 | 4.150 | 4.150 | 4.000 |
| RAJAH BANK | 9,930 | 2.150 | 2.140 | 1.900 |
| INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK | 8,700 | 4.300 | 4.100 | 3.920 |
| THE HOSN BANK | 69,421 | 5.600 | 5.540 | 5.220 |
| JORDAN TRADING BANK | 124,125 | 3.000 | 2.950 | 2.780 |
| AMMAN INVESTMENT BANK | 9,400 | 3.200 | 3.100 | 2.900 |
| JOHNSON BANK FOR SAVINGS & INVESTMENT | 23,693 | 4.400 | 4.300 | 4.200 |
| AMMAN TRADING BANK | 10,540 | 1.600 | 1.600 | 1.500 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK | 3,633 | 6.400 | 6.400 | 6.200 |
| AMMAN TRADING BANK FOR INVESTMENT | 110,640 | 1.600 | 1.600 | 1.500 |
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Ousted Georgian leader returns to help Sukhumi

TBILISI, Georgia (Agencies)

Ousted Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia returned suddenly from exile to his homeland Friday and began marshalling support to help his rival, Eduard Shevardnadze, battle Abkhaz separatists.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, a nationalist leader overthrown in an armed revolt in January 1992, flew to his stronghold in western Georgia and immediately called on his supporters to rally to the defence of the Abkhazian capital Sukhumi, his aides said.

A Defence Ministry spokesman, quoted by national radio, said intense fighting was going on in the city's suburbs after rebels had reached outer defences "from many directions" and had occupied several buildings.

Thousands of residents have fled the town, once a favoured seaside resort for the Soviet elite, in the face of shelling by rebels positioned on vantage points above the city.

But Georgian forces have so far managed to maintain their tenuous control even though they lack the firepower of the rebels, he said.

The return of Mr. Gamsakhurdia, a staunch Georgian nationalist, injected a new explosive element into the drama of Georgia as its fight to hold onto Abkhazia.

The surprise development came as the fate of Sukhumi,

where Georgian leader Shevardnadze has based himself, hung in the balance with rebels battling government defenders in the streets after launching a big offensive.

Mr. Shevardnadze, speaking from a bunker in the besieged city as battles raged around him, said only total mobilisation of the Georgian people and the arrival of reinforcements from the south could stop the city being overrun.

"Clashes are now taking place on the streets of Sukhumi," Mr. Shevardnadze said, adding that the city's defenders were fighting "practically with their bare hands" against "mercenary killers armed to the teeth."

Sources in Geneva with access to reliable independent information from the area said only two out of six hospitals were still in operation and one was only partially open.

At the airport, some 5,000 wounded, women, children and old people waited desperately for evacuation but no flights were leaving after three planes were hit by missiles at or near the airport this week.

The separatists, who have encircled Sukhumi, launched their offensive early Friday as government reinforcements pressed their way to the south to try to break the blockade.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia was popularly elected and was the

first president of Georgia after it won independence from the Soviet Union. He was toppled by the army early in 1992 and went into exile in Grozny in neighbouring Chechnya.

From there he has encouraged his supporters in western Georgia to wage armed rebellion against Mr. Shevardnadze, his arch political rival. But he said last week he would be calling on his troops to defend Sukhumi.

In Grozny, a Gamsakhurdia aide confirmed to Reuters by telephone that the former president had returned to his homeland.

He denied that there had been any deal with the embattled Shevardnadze. "The president does not require anybody's permission to go back home," he said.

Asked if this would be Mr. Gamsakhurdia's final return home, he replied: "I think it is for good."

Mr. Gamsakhurdia said Saturday he planned to take over from Mr. Shevardnadze in Tbilisi in the coming days.

"I plan to return to Tbilisi in the coming days," Mr. Gamsakhurdia told AFP in an exclusive interview in Zugdidi.

"I have come to save Georgia, to bring peace to society, to end the civil war and to reinstate legitimate authority," Mr. Gamsakhurdia said.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia made

the remarks a day after returning to Georgia.

There were reports that Mr. Shevardnadze, who has spent the last two weeks in Sukhumi amid heavy fighting, had been airlifted out of the city and was believed to be returning to the capital.

"I won't do it while Shevardnadze is in Sukhumi, and it will be done peacefully," Mr. Gamsakhurdia said, referring to his plan to return to Tbilisi.

He said he enjoyed support from 95 per cent of the Georgian population and blamed the current war in Abkhazia on Mr. Shevardnadze who, he said, had "pushed for provocation."

In Tbilisi, the head of Parliamentary Press Service denied Saturday that Mr. Shevardnadze had left Sukhumi.

He had just spoken to Mr. Shevardnadze by phone from Sukhumi, Ramin Chelidze said, citing an earlier report by the Moscow-based Interfax news agency, which quoted Abkhazian government sources.

The Interfax report said Mr. Shevardnadze had been airlifted out of Sukhumi by helicopter overnight.

The Abkhazians have said they control 60 per cent of Sukhumi. Mr. Shevardnadze, who has been held up in Sukhumi for more than a week, went there pledging to defend the town "to the end."

Angola boycotts peace talks

SAO TOME (R) — The Angolan government refused to attend peace talks with UNITA rebels in the island state of Sao Tome and Principe but sent a written proposal with a U.N. representative instead.

Nigerian General Chris Garuba, head of the U.N. monitoring force in Angola, arrived in the twin-island state Friday afternoon and told reporters he would deliver the government proposals to a UNITA delegation there.

Diplomats were making a last ditch attempt to get the negotiations started to end the war which flared anew last year after UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi rejected his loss in presidential elections.

Tens of thousands of people have been killed in fresh fighting and relief officials say more than a million Angolans are in desperate need of food aid.

The government earlier Friday announced a five-point plan for fresh peace talks with UNITA but it was little different from previous proposals.

The plan, read out on state radio, called for:

— UNITA's withdrawal from all areas occupied since last year's elections.

— A ceasefire.

— Humanitarian aid operations and the evacuation of the wounded and foreigners from zones of conflict.

— Recognition of the validity of Angola's collapsed 1991 peace agreement and a subsequent protocol proposed at the last round of peace talks in Abidjan, Ivory Coast in May.

— Recognition of the validity of legislation currently in



Unable to walk but old enough to eat, a baby at an aid centre in Angola gets some food (AFP photo)

force in Angola.

U.S. Ambassador Joseph Wilson flew to Sao Tome from his base in nearby Gabon Friday for an emergency meeting with President Miguel Trovada about the situation in Angola.

He declined to give details of the meeting but told reporters the United States supported U.N. attempts to get the two sides together.

The U.N. Security Council has reiterated that an arms and oil embargo against UNITA movement will come into force Sunday as planned.

The acting president of the Security Council, Venezuelan

Former fugitive pleads guilty to more charges

BOSTON (AP) — The former anti-war radical who emerged from hiding last week to take responsibility for her past

pleaded guilty to raiding a government armory 23 years ago. Katherine Ann Power, 44, who purportedly was trying to help create a revolutionary army, pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to federal charges of

theft of government property from a national guard armory on Sept. 20, 1970. Defence attorney Ricki Klieman said her client had no regrets about surrendering to face the charges.

"I think she is at peace," Klieman said. Assistant U.S. attorney Brian Kelly said Ms. Power and several accomplices who were caught and convicted long ago stole a pickup truck, military radios, 400 rounds of ammunition and devices for setting off explosives.

Ms. Power told authorities the military equipment was going to be delivered to the Black Panthers, Mr. Kelly said. In exchange for the guilty plea, the government said it would recommend Ms. Power

serve a five-year prison term rather than the maximum 10 years. In addition, the government agreed to dismiss federal bank robbery charges stemming from a holdup in Philadelphia nearly three weeks before the theft.

Ms. Power drove a getaway car in that crime, which netted \$6,200, authorities said. She also drove a getaway car three days after the armory raid when she participated in a Boston bank robbery that left a policeman dead.

Ms. Power, who became one of the nation's longest-sought female fugitives after that crime, surfaced last week to plead guilty in state court to bank robbery and manslaughter.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Tanker explodes, sinks in South China Sea

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — An unladen Panamanian-registered tanker exploded, broke apart and sank Saturday after suffering problems with its ballast off Malaysia in the South China Sea, rescue officials said. Eighteen of the 21 crew members of 12,101-tonne Altair were rescued but the other three were missing following the accident which occurred about 55 nautical miles off the Tioman Island resort at 0300 GMT, they said. "We have alerted all vessels plying the area to avoid the spot where thin sheets of bunker oil are the only physical evidence left of the tanker," said a spokesman for the Malaysian Maritime Rescue and Coordination Centre (MRCC). Shipping sources quoted unconfirmed reports as saying that the explosion was triggered by problems encountered with the tanker's ballast — a heavy material used in vessels to secure stability. The 11-year-old tanker sank about two hours after a loud explosion was heard by passing ships. The MRCC spokesman said the tanker was on its way to the port of Pasir Gudang in southern Johor state for maintenance.

Clinton touts crime bill in Florida

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida (R) — President Bill Clinton Friday said a rash of violence against foreign tourists in Florida reflected a national problem and urged Americans to support gun control to "get the guns out of the hands of the kids." Mr. Clinton, speaking at a juvenile rehabilitation centre, deplored the bloodshed that has claimed the lives of nine foreign tourists in this state in the last year. But he said it was a symptom of a growing problem in which America's youths are becoming a threat to themselves and those around them. He urged Congress to pass an anti-crime bill he introduced in the legislature Thursday that would expand the death penalty and increase the number of police in cities initially by \$8,000. Four German tourists, two Canadians, two Britons and one Venezuelan had been killed in Florida, many shot dead in their hired cars, since October last year. Two died in the last three weeks. "We know from experience after experience after experience that the kind of violence that unfortunately grips the headlines in Florida in the last several days, and grieves so many of us as Americans... that is far from the problem of Florida alone," Mr. Clinton said.

Sino-British ties worsen ahead of talks

PEKING (AFP) — Almost one year after Hong Kong governor Chris Patten put forward his plans for democratic reform, Sino-British relations appear as acrimonious as ever as the two sides gear up for a 12th round of talks. Following months of wrangling, London and Peking were upbeat in July after an agreement between British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd and his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen to speed up the sluggish pace of talks on Hong Kong and take steps to improve relations. But little progress has been made in subsequent talks, launched in April to try to reach a consensus on the proposals made by Mr. Patten in his October 1992 policy address to expand the franchise in the last elections before the colony reverts to China in 1997. Sino-British relations, meanwhile, have deteriorated still further ahead of the 12th round of talks beginning here Sunday, next Friday's Qian-Hurd meeting in New York and Mr. Patten's second policy address on Oct. 6.

N. Korea admits missile test

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea admitted Saturday it has test-fired a missile in what it called a "regular missile launching exercise" aimed at boosting its defence capabilities against anti-Communist moves. A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman in a statement Friday accused Japan of launching a "frantic" campaign against Pyongyang about such a missile exercise "some time ago." The Japanese government announced in June that North Korea had in late May test-fired in the Sea of Japan a Rodong-1 missile which, with an estimated range of 1,000 kilometers, can hit most of Japan. Japan and South Korea agreed Friday to cooperate and consolidate their efforts to block North Korean nuclear weapons development, Japanese officials said. They said the agreement was reached in a 90-minute meeting between South Korean Foreign Minister Han Sung-Joo and his Japanese counterpart, Tsutomu Hata. Mr. Han arrived here Thursday for a three-day stop on his way to the United States to attend a United Nations meeting. His 11-day itinerary also includes a visit to Washington and a series of meetings in New York with foreign ministers and heads of state from two dozen nations.

Rao cautions Pakistan over militants

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao cautioned Pakistan Friday against supporting separatist militants after Sikh guerrillas in northern Punjab state killed at least three ruling Congress Party members. Mr. Rao, addressing an election rally at Delhi's 17th century Red Fort, also accused Hindu militants of threatening his economic reforms programme by using religion to change India's agenda. "Pakistan's support for terrorism is damaging the atmosphere for any kind of talks with them," Mr. Rao said, a day after Sikh militants ambushed a bus carrying his supporters.

2 Belgian U.N. soldiers hurt in central Bosnia

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Two Belgian soldiers serving with U.N. forces were wounded by gunfire at their camp in Sandici, central Bosnia, the second such incident there in a week, the local Belgian commander said Saturday.

This follows the wounding Thursday of two British soldiers, hit by shellfire in central Bosnia and of a French soldier hit by a bullet the same day in Sarajevo. On Monday, another Belgian U.N. soldier was wounded by gunfire at the Sandici camp.

In the latest incident, the two men were driving a vehicle Friday when they came under light-arms fire. One man was hit in the shoulder, the other in the foot. They were not seriously hurt, the Belgian commander said.

The incident at Sandici, where a joint Belgian-Dutch transport group is located, followed the shooting Monday evening of another Belgian soldier, wounded in the leg by a bullet that came through his tent at the camp.

U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) officials were unable to say whether in both incidents the camp had been deliberately targeted, or whether the U.N. soldiers were hit by stray bullets fired by warring Bosnian Croats and Muslims whose confrontation line is some 1.5 kilometres to the north.

More countries to lift against S. Africa economic sanctions

SYDNEY (Agencies) — Individual Commonwealth members Saturday announced they would lift trade, investment and financial sanctions against South Africa with immediate effect.

Australia and New Zealand announced they were falling into line with a decision made by the Commonwealth and the United States, after Friday's call by African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela at the United Nations for an end to economic sanctions as his country moves towards a non-racial democracy.

Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans said in New York that the ending of the sanctions followed the passage of a bill in the South African parliament to establish a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) in the lead-up to non-racial democratic elections next April.

He said the only remaining sanctions applied by Australia against the republic was the U.N. Security Council-imposed arms embargo which would continue until a new democratically elected government was installed, the media here reported.

In Wellington, New Zealand's Prime Minister Jim Bolger said the passing of the bill represented "a real commitment to power sharing."

"The difficulties ahead should not be underestimated," he said. "However, I hope that this opening of Commonwealth trade and related measures will encourage all South Africans to take the hard decisions ahead."

In New Zealand's case the decision is little more than

symbolic. The country's trade with South Africa was insignificant before sanctions were introduced.

Television New Zealand reported diplomatic relations could resume early next year. The decision to lift sanctions comes almost two years after Commonwealth government leaders established a timetable for phasing out the sanctions they imposed in 1977 against sporting links, and expanded to take in economic and arms embargoes, in 1985.

The United States joined the Commonwealth countries Friday in withdrawing the economic sanctions against South Africa.

The Romanian Foreign Ministry Saturday hailed the TEC legislation as "capable of resolving the political situation of the country in a fair and lasting fashion."

"Romania will continue to develop relations with (South Africa), encouraging its reintegration into the international community," a statement said.

China Saturday welcomed the move to set up the TEC and said it would make a positive response to Mr. Mandela's call for sanctions to be lifted.

"We warmly welcome such a new and important development in South Africa's peace process," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

"China will make a positive response to (ANC) Chairman Mandela's appeal to the international community for removing economic sanctions against South Africa," the spokesman was quoted by Xinhua as saying.

The European Community (EC) Saturday said that it wel-

comed political developments in South Africa that enabled Mr. Mandela to call for the lifting of all economic sanctions.

In a statement released here, the E.C. recalled that it had already lifted an economic embargo in 1992, but added that it "will shortly consider further steps."

The statement said the Community and its member states "warmly welcome recent events," considered "the culmination of the first phase of a process that will lead to non-racial democracy in South Africa."

Canada Friday lifted trade and investment sanctions against South Africa, External Affairs Minister Perrin Beatty announced.

"Our goal was to give credit when change took place, to encourage all parties to proceed with negotiations as rapidly as possible and to sustain pressure for further change," Mr. Beatty told a news conference.

Trade, investment and other financial sanctions on South Africa were lifted immediately, he said.

"Canada was right to take the lead in the fight against apartheid and to stand firm," he said.

"Our task now is to help the people of South Africa transform the promise of democracy into the reality of democratic majority rule," he said.

Malaysia announced immediate steps to establish diplomatic ties at the ambassadorial level with South Africa.

Foreign Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Friday Malaysia would also lift trade

and economic sanctions against South Africa, effective immediately.

In a statement released in New York, where he will attend the opening of the General Assembly, Mr. Abdullah pointed to moves toward multilateral rule in South Africa. He said with the lifting of the sanctions, members of the private sector in the two countries were free to enter into trade and economic relations with each other.

New York Mayor David Dinkins Friday called for a repeal of a New York City anti-apartheid law he said could free as much as \$40 billion in city pension funds for investment in South Africa.

Mr. Dinkins made the announcement after Mr. Mandela asked the United Nations to lift all economic sanctions during South Africa's transition to a non-racial democracy. "Today I have forwarded to the City Council of the city of New York a bill that calls for the repeal of the New York anti-apartheid law," Mr. Dinkins said.

He said this would open the way for teachers and other city unions, who had refused to invest funds in South Africa, to do so again. He said the money involved was about \$40 billion.

In addition he said he learned that California would be taking similar actions, possibly over the weekend.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) promised late Friday to do its best to help South Africa through its political transition to a non-racial democracy.

In a statement issued here, IMF Managing Director

Michel Camdessus voiced admiration for "the courageous steps that are being taken by South African statesmen to build a new South Africa."

He promised any policy advice and technical assistance that South African authorities might request, and held out the prospect of early financial support to offset the impact of the recent drought and poor export prices.

Mr. Camdessus's statement came on the eve of a scheduled meeting Saturday with Mr. Mandela.

South African President F. W. de Klerk said Friday he was optimistic about his country's transition to a non-racial democracy despite the recent surge in violence there.

"I'm optimistic for a peaceful transition. The level of violence is obviously too high, but security will improve," Mr. de Klerk said on a Cable News Network interview.

He said that most of the violence stemmed from the country's economic woes and that only 10 per cent of the attacks were of a political nature.

That violence was carried out by "ultra-radical people," according to Mr. de Klerk, who added: "They don't want negotiations to succeed, they are using terror and they are using assassinations."

Mr. de Klerk, who met U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali Friday, said he had good relations with Mr. Mandela but that the two had differences.

"I like him and I think he likes me...but we represent different political viewpoints."

Carnegie opens with Philadelphia Orchestra

NEW YORK (AP) — The Philadelphia Orchestra, with its new music director Wolfgang Sawallisch, and violinist Midori as guest artist, opened this year's Carnegie Hall season — with dash. New Yorkers got an early listen and look at Sawallisch, who became the sixth music director of the 93-year-old Philadelphia Orchestra only this month. Last December, he finished 21 years as music director and general director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. In the final piece on the programme, Brahms' Second Symphony, Sawallisch revealed how solidly he knows the music. All orchestral voices were clear — and emphatic. Programme notes dwell on the "symphonic joy" of the symphony. The Philadelphia's approach with Sawallisch was almost a call to appreciate life as complex and majestic. It was sit-up-and-listen time. Sawallisch's hand and arm gestures are generous but he doesn't make a theatrical impression. He keeps his feet on the ground and only occasionally makes a big gesture with his whole body. Midori, 21, played Sibelius' Violin Concerto in D Minor. She can float a pianissimo with breathtaking beauty as a few great sopranos can do. In the beginning, she played delicately, then began adding an array of tonal colours.

Allen lashes out at prosecutor, asks Farrow for truce

NEW YORK (AP) — Woody Allen lashed out at his ex-lover Mia Farrow, police and a Connecticut prosecutor, who said he was going to try the filmmaker even though he believes Allen molested his daughter. Allen said at a news conference that Farrow, the prosecutor and police formed an "unwholesome alliance" against him. "Their cheap scheming reeks of sleaze and deception," he said. Later, Farrow's lawyer, Eleanor Alter, said her client agreed with the prosecutor's decision to spare eight-year-old Dylan from the trauma of a trial. Farrow felt the same way and "everything that could possibly be done was done to protect the child." Allen said at a separate news conference that Farrow did not attend. Allen, 58, was accused of sexually fondling Dylan in an attic at Farrow's Connecticut country house in August 1992. Earlier Friday, Litchfield, Conn., state's attorney Frank Maco said state police investigators had drawn up an arrest warrant for Allen but he decided there was no "compelling interest" in further pursuing sexual abuse allegations. Allen said the case was dropped.

Australia target Germany in Davis Cup final

CHANDIGARH, India (AFP) — Australia set their sights on a Davis Cup final clash against Germany after sweeping India's challenge aside Saturday.

Formidable doubles pairing Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde won the doubles Saturday to give Australia a decisive 3-0.

Now they will have to wait to see if Germany, inspired by Michael Stich and Marc Goellner, can kill off Sweden after the visitors took a 2-0 advantage Friday.

Australia had made a flying start when the 23-year-old Jason Stoltenberg, playing his first cup tie since 1989, ran over Leander Paes in the opening singles 6-3, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3. U.S. Open semi-finalist Wally Masur then saw off veteran Ramesh Krishnan 6-2, 6-0, 6-4 at the Chandigarh Lawn Tennis Association

(CLTA) courts. That all but killed off India's hopes of reaching November's final, with the Woodbridge-Woodforde combination, ranked two in the world, recognised by both sides as all but unbeatable.

The Australian pair duly beat Ramesh Krishnan and Leander Paes 6-2, 7-6 (7-3), 6-1.

Germany looked in similarly impressive form in Sweden, where world number six Stich was at his best while dismissing Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson 6-2, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2.

That result, however, was soon overshadowed by Goellner's 22 aces and his shock victory over Wimbledon champion Stefan Edberg.

Goellner won 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4), leaving Sweden needing to win the final three matches to reach the final.

In other Davis Cup action,

Spain took an unbeatable 3-0 lead over South Korea Saturday at Seoul on the second day of their World Group qualifying round.

Spanish pair of Carlos Costa and Tomas Carbonell beat South Koreans Chang Ui-Jong and Kim Chi-Wan by 3-1 (6-3, 6-2, 5-7, 6-4) after the Spaniards had won the two singles on the first day. The two reverse singles will be played Sunday.

Israel beat Switzerland 3-2 after Friday's final two singles matches to join the world's 16 premier nations in next year's event.

New Zealand kept their hopes alive against Austria at Christchurch Saturday when they won the crucial doubles match.

Brett Steven and Kelly Evernden lost both singles matches Friday but teamed up to beat Thomas Buchmayer and Alex Antonitsch. New

Zealand now trail 2-1. They have to win both reverse singles matches Sunday to beat Austria.

Mark Knowles of the Bahamas gave Malival Washington a fright at Charlotte, North Carolina Friday before cramps forced him to retire, giving the United States a 2-0 lead in their Davis Cup World Group qualifying tie.

Knowles led Washington by two sets to one at the time. It was a crushing blow for the Bahamas, who are fighting for entry into the elite World Group, especially since Knowles and Roger Smith are their whole team.

The Americans, the current holders of the trophy, are bidding to stay in the World Group after losing in the first round this year to Australia.

Andre Agassi predictably put the Americans 1-0 ahead with a 6-2, 6-2, 6-3 victory over Smith.

Tapie could quit Marseille

MARSEILLE (AFP) — Olympique Marseille President Bernard Tapie could be set to quit after violence and a pitch invasion left the disgraced French club facing new sanctions.

Club Vice-President Jean-Louis Leveau said Saturday the situation was "extremely serious" and feared Marseille's latest setback "could lead to Tapie announcing he has decided to leave the club."

He blamed the referee for Friday's incidents and said the club had been "provoked".

Marseille, already banned from defending their European Cup crown and stripped of their French League title in the wake of bribery and match-fixing allegations, saw their fortunes hit rock bottom when fans invaded the pitch with just three minutes to go and forced their home game against Metz to be abandoned.

Riot police were brought in and 11 officers and eight supporters were injured during clashes which spread to the city centre.

Metz had been leading 3-0 after three players, goalkeeper Fabien Barthez and Basile Boli of Marseille and Lubos Kubik of Metz, had been sent off.

The incident could lead to OM facing further punishment from the French Football Federation (FFF), who stripped them of their championship title only this week under pressure from world governing body FIFA.

An FFF disciplinary committee will decide what sanctions to take. Marseille already have a suspended closure of the stadium Velodrome hanging over them after fans threw cans at St Etienne goalkeeper Joseph-Antoine Bell last month.

Leveau blamed the referee for igniting the violence, adding: "The players are completely gutted. They are the victims of a hold-up."

The alleged violence had not begun within the ground but said fans and players had been provoked.

This climate of provocation, we felt it even before the kick-off when one of the linesmen told Basile Boli, 'Marseille are finished.'

Prost announces retirement

ESTORIL, Portugal (AFP) — Alain Prost, who could clinch his fourth world title this weekend, shocked Formula One racing Friday by announcing his retirement at the end of the season.

The 38-year-old Frenchman, who has won a record 51 Grands Prix, and his three world titles make him one of the sport's all-time greats. But he has been demoralised by constant criticism, said fellow competitor Jean Alesi. The Ferrari driver said Prost was "a wounded champion."

The day was also marked by Ayrton Senna's announcement that he was leaving the McLaren team at the end of the year. Speculation mounted that the Brazilian three-time world champion would take Prost's spot at Williams Renault.

Senna promised an announcement later Friday, but Williams chief Frank Williams, said no decision on next season's drivers would be made public for 10 days.

Williams led tributes to Prost whose brilliance at the wheel has often been interspersed with controversial disputes with fellow drivers and the Formula One establishment.

Prost's retirement, after that last year by 1992 winner Nigel Mansell, means that Formula One will probably start next year without its reigning champion in competition.

Prost made his Formula One debut in 1980, with McLaren, having started racing in karting and Formula Three. He has taken part in 196 Grands Prix and won the world title in 1985, 1986 and 1989.

Smiling and relaxed, Prost told of his intentions during a press conference at the Estoril circuit, having clocked the fastest time in the first official practice session for Sunday's Portuguese Grand Prix.

Only teammate Damon Hill and Senna can catch the record-breaking Frenchman in this year's drivers' standings. After Portugal, there are races in Japan Oct. 24, and Australia.

"I wanted to announce to you that I will not be competing in Formula One after the Australian Grand Prix November 7. This sport has given me everything," Prost said, with Williams at his side.

"Prost is a gentleman," said



Alain Prost (right) speaks to a mechanic during a pause between practice sessions (AFP photo)

Williams, "a person with whom it is very easy to work. The time spent with him has been too short."

He added: "Alain has fought more and more as the season has gone on. And I find that his driving has become more and more precise. He will always be welcome in the paddock and I wish him all the success in the future."

But it has been a difficult season for Prost who was expected to announce his retirement at the end of the season.

Though he has not been involved in such close rivalry with Senna, he has had a bitter clash with the International Auto Sport Federation, the world governing body.

At the start of the season, Prost came close to being suspended after making what were considered derogatory remarks about FISA and its president Max Mosley.

Prost twice threatened to quit, over the remarks and then FISA's technical changes introduced because of Williams' overwhelming domination.

Alesi, a close friend of Prost, said he was only "moderately surprised" by the Frenchman's announcement.

"We see each other a lot. We talk to each other frequently and I knew what his state of mind was. For three or four months I have thought that I have been with... a wounded champion."

"He is never forgiven for anything. When he wins, it is expected or it is because of the team's advice. It is a pity because he is still the best and he could have been champion again next season. He must be really fed up."

Prost was always marked out as a driver to watch. But it took him five seasons to win a first world title.

He won seven races to Niki Lauda's five in 1984 but the Austrian still won the title.

In 1985 he sealed the championship in a McLaren at the British Grand Prix at Brands Hatch. The race, though, was won by Nigel Mansell — his first in Formula One — with whom he was to become a career long rival.

Australians looking forward to Olympics

SYDNEY (Agencies) — Australians are looking forward to a massive economic boost as Sydney savoured Saturday their hosting of the 2000 Olympics Games.

Unprecedented scenes of jubilation here in the pre-dawn hours of Friday followed the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) decision in Monte Carlo.

That initial joy, however, was quickly followed by hard-nosed financial planning.

The seven-year lead-up to the games and the event itself would offer opportunities for Australia to sell itself to the world trade market, Trade Minister Peter Cook said Saturday.

Cook said the Olympics offered the chance to convince the world that Australia was a sophisticated and technologically advanced society.

He said the Olympics, awarded to Sydney ahead of Peking, Manchester, Berlin and Istanbul, would also reinforce the government's Market Australia programme, which received 21 million Australian dollars (\$13.6 million) last month to sell Australia as a source of sophisticated goods and services.

Industry Minister Alan Griffiths said that half the economic benefits and new jobs to flow from Sydney's successful Olympic bid would go to places other than the New South Wales capital.

He said the Australian government would lend its full support to suitable projects



Fireworks explode above the Opera House as Australians celebrate the International Olympic Committee's decision to give Sydney the right to host the 2000 Olympics (AFP photo)

taking advantage of the new international interest in Australia, including a major exposition proposed for Melbourne.

"Nearly half of the 150,000 jobs created and half of the

newspapers, with all publishing extensive reports and analyses and the tabloid daily Telegraph Mirror printing a 48-page special edition wrap-around.

The broadsheet Sydney Morning Herald said in its editorial that the simple utterance of the words "the winner is Sydney!" had changed forever the life and history of the glittering, magical city.

Sydney has been put — metaphorically — on the map, the paper said. It was Sydney's natural destiny to present a memorable Olympic Games.

Meanwhile, Sydney is considering bidding for the 1999 World Athletics Championships, following on its success in winning the 2000 Olympic Games, an official said Friday.

"There's some chance we will look at the worlds in 1999," Athletics Australia General Manager Neil King told Australian Associated Press (AAP).

"We have to draw breath and think about what we can do — it will almost certainly mean we will be able to stage a number of world class meetings," he said.

The Sydney bid featured two main athletics venues, an 80,000-seat main stadium and a 15,000 capacity complex which will be used as a warm-up track.

Both stadiums are expected to be completed before 1999. King said Sydney's Olympic triumph would help attract athletes for Grand Prix events in the city.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSHI
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K8752 ♣6 ♦83 ♣97532
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
Pass 1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠
What action do you take?
A.—The enemy may be about to bid one of your long suits, so why do anything to deter them? The odds on West converting to penalties are slight and, if that happens, partner still has a chance to act. Since a one-spade response is considered forcing these days, stay out of trouble and pass.

Q.2—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K8752 ♣6 ♦83 ♣97532
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 1 ♠ Dbl? ?
—Penalties
What action do you take?
A.—If partner wants to be rescued, there's a redouble available. However, it would be foolish of you to look for an alternative contract, because if partner has a red-suit hand any action by you could just get your side into deeper trouble. Pass.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AK5 ♣Q83 ♠95 ♠Q10653
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—What lovely support you have for partner's first-bid suit, but don't let it go to your head. Your top spades were an integral part of your two-over-one response, so don't bid the same values twice. A simple preference to two spades does full justice to the hand.

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you

hold:
♠AS ♣AQ865 ♠AQ1032 ♠5
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
1 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—Slam beckons—if you can find a fit. Prospects are not promising on this auction, but your only responsibility now is to select the most descriptive bid available, and we feel a jump to three diamonds stands out. Since two diamonds, the fourth suit, would be forcing, a jump shift into that suit must be natural, confirming a second long suit.

Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Q85 ♣AK5 ♠AS ♠AQ1063
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 NT Pass 3 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—With all suits controlled, the quality of partner's spades is the key that opens the door to slam. No cue-bid by you will serve any useful purpose, so we like an immediate jump to five spades, asking partner about the quality of the trump suit.

Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Q85 ♣Q84 ♠AQJ6 ♠K63
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
1 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—The obvious contract is no trump, and it's simply a question of how many you should bid. The right action is three no trump. A jump bid of two no trump now shows only 11-12 points, and might get passed.

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RALLYING FORCES: Russian Vice President and leader of the parliamentary rebellion Alexander Rutskoi addresses his troops before inspecting them at the parliament building Saturday (see page one). Hundreds of men, some dressed in uniform and some in plain clothes marched past Rutskoi (AFP photo)

Five Muta students testify for prosecution in plot trial

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

MARKA — Six prosecution witnesses testified at the State Security Court Saturday against suspects in the Muta University trial where 10 men are accused of plotting to assassinate His Majesty King Hussein and replace the regime.

The witnesses, who cannot be named in the press, were all students or former students at Muta University, a military academy south of Amman. Through the testimonies, the prosecution tried to establish that five of the accused, all of whom were students at the university, were peddling anti-regime "ideas" to their friends, mainly that the King was a "non-believer who should be removed from power."

The defence team refused to cross-examine any of the witnesses, saying they will prove in their defence that these witnesses either had personal differences with some of the suspects, or that their testimonies were extracted under duress by the General Intelligence Department (GID). Some of them were detained by the GID for up to three months when the case was under investigation since April.

More than 30 people were arrested and detained in connection with the case at the GID in April, but most were released last month.

The 10 suspects — two of whom are being tried in absentia, two alleged members of the Islamic Liberation Party (ILP), and one member of the Royal Escort Unit in addition to the Muta students and an ex-student — are also charged with trying to change the Jordanian Constitution through "illegal and violent" means. They also face charges of belonging to the ILP, an illegal party in the Kingdom which has not submitted permission for legal licensing. The prosecution charges that the suspects had planned to kill King Hussein at a graduation ceremony at the university on June 26.

None of Saturday's witnesses made any statements regarding the alleged members of the ILP or the former officer of the Royal Escort Unit, a

Muta gradué.

Female relatives of the suspects as well as the entire family of one of them were barred from the military court Saturday. At one point, the women blocked the traffic, screaming their grievances in front of the courthouse and had to wait outside until the session ended to meet up with their husbands or fathers.

Inside the courtroom, presiding Judge Colonel Hafez Amin told a protesting defence attorney that the court would not tolerate any disorder, and thus the ban on the women from attending the court hearings. "I have already made it clear I will not allow chaos in this court," the judge stressed.

Last week, a brother of one of the defendants shouted at a prosecution witness that he was lying in his testimony because he was "intimidated by the armed military police." The man was expelled from the courtroom and his entire family walked out.

Col. Amin also warned local journalists not to publish the minutes of the trial and said he would prevent them from attending future sessions and that he would take legal action against them if they continued to do so. Two of the local journalists working for Arabic dailies walked out of the court following the judge's warning. Another journalist from the Al Ahali weekly was prevented from entering the court Saturday after his permit was withdrawn from him at the gate.

Defence lawyers protested that doctors had not yet been sent to conduct medical check-ups on some of the defendants to report on signs of alleged torture during detention.

The judge responded that he had sent a letter to the Ministry of Health and other concerned health departments in response to their request and promised to try to speed up the process. Defence lawyers privately accused the court of delaying the process by going through "long bureaucratic channels."

The six witnesses, two of whom admitted they were kicked out of the university, and two who were roommates with two of the defendants, gave more or less the same testimonies, mainly:

— That the five suspects were religious and close to each other;

— That one of the defendant's behaviour began to change. "He stopped praying at the mosque, started watching television and smoking cigarettes";

— That they heard some of the defendants calling the King a "kafer" (non-believer) who should be killed ... and to remove the entire Hashemite regime;

— That they heard some of the defendants saying the regime and laws of the country were "western-oriented" and should be changed to apply Islamic Sharia;

— That the suspects expressed their admiration of Khaled Ismailbuli, the Egyptian who assassinated President Anwar Sadat in 1981, and had books about him; and

— That the suspects were exchanging religious books and tapes.

One of the witnesses contradicted himself when Col. Amin asked him whether one of the defendants ever mentioned which ruler he considered a "kafer," the witness said "No." But when the court clerk read out the testimony he had given to the prosecution, King Hussein's name was mentioned as the "kafer who should be killed." After hearing the clerk, the witness said that the testimony he made to the prosecution was true.

In another incident, Col. Amin shouted at the defendants for grinning over the testimony of one of the witnesses. "This is a court, not a salon," the judge told the suspects. "If any one of you smile, I'll throw him out."

Before the court adjourned until Sunday, Prosecutor Major Mohammad Hijazi announced a new witness, a security officer who confiscated evidence from the home of one of the defendants. Angry objections from the defence were overruled by the court.

Two more prosecution witnesses will testify today, and the court clerk is expected to read out the confessions the defendants gave to the prosecution before the defence presents its case.

Accord with Israel marks new world order — Arafat

Combined agency dispatches

NEW DELHI — The Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) start of a "new world order," PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said Saturday during a brief stopover in the eastern city of Calcutta.

He told reporters the accord, which had been accepted by most Arabs and Palestinians, would pave the way for a new world order of peace and end the global "cold war" as well as the troubles in the Gulf, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported.

Mr. Arafat, en route to Turkey from Indonesia, claimed the support of 80 per cent of his people and denied any opposition to the treaty.

"Have you not noticed that waves of people had celebrated the accord?" he said.

He said he hoped Palestinians would be able to form a stable, separate state with Jerusalem as its capital.

"It will be our duty to make our land more prosperous," he said, adding that fundamentalists in the new territory would have to accept the mandate of the majority.

"I hope the minority will respect the decision of the majority. I have full faith in my people and I will get their cooperation in building a new state."

He said he hoped India would continue the support "they gave us during our long and difficult march."

India has long been a supporter of the PLO and was one of the first countries to recognise the State of Palestine proclaimed in 1988 by Mr. Arafat, whom it treats as a head of state. It established full diplomatic relations with Israel last year.

In Jakarta, Mr. Arafat said he would insist on the implementation of elements of the accord with Israel that would settle the future of Jerusalem.

Mr. Arafat stressed at a news conference that elections must be held in Jerusalem within what he said was the nine-month period laid out in the Palestinian-Israeli accord, signed last week in Washington.

And the PLO leader said he would insist on seeing honoured by both sides aspects of the new accord that he said provided for discussion of Jerusalem's final status within three years.

He also said he was demanding that all Arab institutions and religious shrines in Jeru-

salem be under Palestinian control.

"The Holy Jerusalem (will be) the capital of the Palestinian independent state, sooner or later, (it is) clear and obvious," Mr. Arafat said, adding: "And if Mr. Rabin has his own red line, we have our own four red lines."

Mr. Arafat was in Indonesia to brief President Suharto, who chairs the 108-member Non-Aligned Movement, on the accord.

He said Mr. Suharto offered continued support to the Palestinian people, but he declined to say whether any financial aid had been offered.

Official media in China, an earlier stop on Mr. Arafat's tour, talked of giving material aid to the territory of Gaza and the West Bank city of Jericho, which are to come under Palestinian self-rule under the terms of the peace pact, but no figures were mentioned.

Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, has voiced its support for the peace accord but has remained cautious about opening ties with Israel.

Although a regular visitor to Indonesia, Mr. Arafat was for the first time greeted as a head of state, replete with national anthems and a military salute. He was welcomed by Defence Minister Edi Sudrajat and later met President Suharto.

Several thousand Muslims last Sunday rallied to condemn the peace accord as a sellout but leaders of the protest promised not to disrupt Mr. Arafat's visit.

Mr. Arafat arrived in Ankara later Saturday to discuss the Israeli-PLO peace accord and possible Turkish aid to Palestinians.

On the way, Mr. Arafat stopped at Abu Dhabi airport in his first trip to the emirate since Iraq's Aug. 2, 1990, invasion of Kuwait.

Two sons of United Arab Emirates' President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan — including Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Sultan — were at the airport to receive Mr. Arafat who has been unwelcome in Gulf Arab states since the PLO appeared to side with Iraq during the Gulf crisis.

Diplomatic sources noted that the official UAE news agency WAM referred to the PLO chairman as "President Arafat."

"This is the first time in a long while they use 'President Arafat,'" said one, adding that it was a sign PLO efforts to mend fences with Gulf Arab

states might be bearing fruit.

Mr. Arafat spent about an hour at the Abu Dhabi airport. "It was an opportunity for President Arafat to discuss relations with the UAE and brief it on the autonomy agreement with Israel," the PLO representative in Abu Dhabi, Khaled Malik, told AFP.

"But it was not a scheduled visit," he added, saying that Mr. Arafat was just passing through.

In Turkey, President Suleyman Demirel welcomed Mr. Arafat and his wife, Suha, at Esenboga airport with full ceremonial honours.

In his welcoming speech, Mr. Demirel hailed the Israeli-PLO accord as a "brave" step towards peace. He also underlined Turkey's long-standing support of the Palestinian cause.

Mr. Arafat said Turkey's support was essential for the Palestinians at a time when they were working for a lasting and fair peace in the Middle East.

"If God is willing we will be able to pray altogether one day in the Holy City of Jerusalem," Mr. Arafat added.

Mr. Arafat leaves Turkey on Sunday.

Earlier this month he travelled to Oman in his first visit to a Gulf Arab state since the Gulf crisis.

Iranian opposition

Iran will not be able to sabotage the peace process despite its "pernicious" role in the region, Mr. Arafat told a French magazine in an interview published Friday.

Mr. Arafat accused the Iranian government of "playing a very, very pernicious role" and of "sending money to fanatics" in the Middle East and wanting everyone in the region under their control, Paris Match magazine reported.

"I know them because they used to be my friends," Mr. Arafat said.

"But now that a peace agreement is signed, there is no chance of it being endangered. Particularly if that accord is not just signed with the Palestinians but with all the Arab countries," he said.

In the same interview Mr. Arafat's wife Suha said that freedom was the most important thing she had been forced to give up since her marriage.

"I lived in Paris, I went to cafes, theaters, I could stay out until two in the morning," she said. "Now I can't go out without bodyguards. I have lost my liberty but I don't

regret that."

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin also told the weekly magazine that he hoped if his country was able to delegate areas of responsibility to Palestinians it could change attitudes.

He said the PLO would create a system of control to prevent attacks against Israelis.

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani called on Muslim countries Saturday to take a common stand toward the Palestinian issue, Tehran Radio reported.

"Muslim countries should avoid discord among themselves and refrain from a one-sided view of the Palestinian issue," Mr. Rafsanjani was quoted as saying during a meeting with visiting Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf Ben Alawi Ben Abdullah.

"The 50-year struggle of Palestinians will not be forgotten with this accord," he said. "The world of Islam will never succumb to this humiliation."

The president warned against efforts by the "enemies of Islam" to create a rift among Muslim states and called for "serious measures" to be taken to resolve existing problems.

Iran, along with Iraq and Libya, has strongly condemned the Israeli-PLO accord.

Mr. Ben Alawi, who arrived here Friday for a two-day visit, briefed Mr. Rafsanjani on the development in the Gulf and about the PLO-Israel peace accord.

The foreign minister also stressed the importance of the stands taken on international issues and said relations between Tehran and Oman were "stable and of special value," according to the radio.

Mr. Abdallah met Friday with his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati to discuss bilateral ties and regional security.

Iranian Deputy Speaker Hassan Ruhani said Iran does not plan to interfere militarily in the Middle East but will do all it can to restore the rights of Palestinians.

Mr. Ruhani, speaking to the Iranian news agency IRNA in Vienna, said the Islamic republic is "ideologically and politically" against the Israeli-PLO accord.

"Iran will spare no efforts to restore the rights of the innocent nation of Palestine," he said. "But contrary to U.S. and Zionist propaganda, we have no intention of engaging in military operations in the region."

Christopher urges end to Arab embargo on Israel

WASHINGTON (Agencies)

The signing of an Israeli Palestine-Liberation peace accord should significantly boost the chances of ending an Arab economic embargo against Israel, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Saturday.

Mr. Christopher, speaking in an interview on National Public Radio, said he hoped the accord on limited autonomy in the occupied territories signed here earlier this month would give "real stimulus" to negotiations aimed at lifting the ban.

He said he was hopeful Arab States would support the Israeli-PLO accord, which was ratified by the Israeli Knesset on Thursday. He said Arab "intransigence" on the embargo issue would harm both Palestinians and Israelis. He said Saudi Arabia was

prepared to support the autonomy accord, despite its disagreements with the PLO.

He added that he hoped Syria's initially "cool" response to the accord would become more positive in time. Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Shara is due to meet Mr. Christopher in Washington on Oct. 5.

Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia said Friday in Washington that the Arab League would discuss the question of the Arab boycott on Israel in the near future.

GCC's stand

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states will not establish relations with Israel until it withdraws from all occupied Arab land, GCC Secretary-General Fahim Al Qassimi said in an interview published

Saturday.

"To raise the question of establishing relations is even more premature when we haven't even entered a phase of normalisation yet," Mr. Qassimi told the Bahrain newspaper Al Khaleej following talks with U.S. officials in Washington.

"If Israel withdraws from all occupied territory and comes out in favour of a global-peace settlement, nothing will stand in the way of the establishment of normal relations," he added.

Mr. Qassimi said there could not be a normalisation of ties between GCC states Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman until Israel withdraws from "all occupied Arab territory, including Jerusalem."

He said the Israeli-PLO

agreement was a mere "declaration of principles."

"We are not yet at peace," he said. "Arab land is still occupied on the Golan, southern Lebanon and the West Bank."

"We have supported the agreement because we accept whatever the PLO chooses as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," he said.

Mr. Qassimi ruled out an early lifting of the Arab economic embargo of Israel saying it is a "secondary question compared with that of eliminating the massive weapons of destruction which Israel possesses."

"Why should we renounce a legal right when no one asks Israel to destroy its nuclear arsenal, which represents a far greater danger than the economic boycott," he said.

Important to maintain peace momentum — U.S.

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Acknowledging that "there is a great deal of speculation about where things stand" in the Middle East peace process and what might happen next, State Department spokesman Michael McCurry cautioned reporters against believing that a breakthrough is imminent.

"It's very important to keep the momentum going in the process, but there are very important steps that occur as you implement the joint declaration of principles between Israel and the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation)," the spokesman pointed out.

After first implementing the Israeli-PLO agreement, "the momentum of that achievement" must be expanded and built into a comprehensive peace in the region, McCurry said, adding that those are the next steps the United States is pursuing with the parties.

"It's false expectation to think there will be agreement on top of agreement in this process," he told reporters. "In the case of the Syrian-Israeli track, there's just a

great deal of hard work that lies ahead."

Secretary of State Warren Christopher will meet with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Shara Oct. 5 in Washington, the spokesman said. The secretary also will meet next week in New York with several foreign ministers from the region.

"Clearly all of these meetings will be related to taking the historic achievements in the Palestinian track and seeing how to convert them into momentum that can carry over to some of the other tracks," he said, noting that all the tracks are interrelated.

"The issues involved in the Syrian-Israeli track are complex. The parties have got a great deal of hard work left on that track," Mr. McCurry said. "I would caution against saying that there's breakthrough imminent. What is imminent is continuing a dialogue with the parties in the region and a determined effort to build on the success of the Israeli-PLO agreement."

China repeats demand for U.S. apology

HONG KONG (Agencies) — China repeated Saturday demands that the United States publicly apologise for intercepting a Chinese cargo ship suspected of carrying chemical weapons, the official Chinese news service Xinhua said.

Xinhua, monitored in Hong Kong, quoted Vice-President Zou Jiahua as making the demands during a ceremony Saturday to salute the crew of the Yinhe, which was boarded in Saudi Arabia in August on its way to Iran.

Mr. Zou also said Washington should pay compensation to the ship's company and crew.

U.S. intelligence officials suspected the Yinhe was carrying precursor chemicals for poison-gas, and dispatched ships and planes to monitor the cargo ship in July.

After chasing the ship for several weeks, it was finally searched by Saudi Arabian and American officials on Aug. 28, but none of the suspected cargo was found.

By Jamal Halaby
The Associated Press

AMMAN — A leader of the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas movement called Saturday for opponents of the Palestinian-Israeli autonomy accord to develop an "alternative leadership" to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

It was the latest move in a campaign launched by hardline Palestinian groups to derail the agreement signed Sept. 13 in Washington by Israel and the PLO.

Ibrahim Ghosheh, spokesman for Hamas in Jordan, told the Associated Press that he was calling for a meeting of opponents "no later than Oct. 1" in either Sudan or Syria.

"It is imperative that a new Palestinian leadership emerges to really reflect the firm principles of the Palestinian people,"

Mr. Ghosheh said.

He argued that the PLO "is no longer considered by many as the representative of the Palestinian people since it betrayed our national cause and signed agreements with the Zionist enemy."

The PLO-Israel accord calls for limited self-rule for the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho. Later autonomy is to be expanded in the West Bank, and a final settlement negotiated.

Many hardline factions oppose the accord, saying it fails to guarantee an independent Palestinian homeland. They charge that it also fails to deal with issues such as the fate of Palestinian refugees and the future of Jerusalem.

It remains to be seen, however, if the "rejectionists" can move beyond rhetoric to

action because of their differing philosophies.

PLO factions such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine want to fight the accord from within the organisation.

PFLP leader George Habash and DFLP head Nayef Hawatmeh have said in recent interviews they would support a call for a new leadership as long as the PLO does not lose its status as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Both have made it clear they would like to see the ouster of PLO leader Yasser Arafat and the 18-member Executive Committee that gave the go ahead to the accord.

Labib Kamhawi, a political scientist, said the opponents' reactions were "feeble against the major developments in the

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Papal encyclical reaffirms contraceptive ban

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul, in his next encyclical, reaffirms the Catholic Church's ban on artificial birth control and homosexuality and orders liberal followers and theologians not to dispute teachings on moral issues. Extensive excerpts of the Pope's 10th encyclical, which is due to be issued early next month by the Vatican, were published by the Adista Catholic News Service. An encyclical is the highest form of papal writing and Catholics are expected to follow its teachings. The encyclical, "Veritatis Splendor" (The Splendour Of The Truth), is a highly specialised theological and philosophical writing on the relationship between natural law, human freedom and moral responsibility. The Pope says man's freedom of choice came from God but must be subordinated to divine wisdom. The new encyclical coincides with the 25th anniversary of Humanae Vitae (On Human Life), Pope Paul VI's landmark 1968 encyclical which banned all contraception on the grounds that it blocked the transmission of life. In one section, the Pope criticises theologians who claim people should be allowed to make their own choices on sexual ethics because the church in the past had unjustifiably put moral labels on once commonly held biological laws.

Mrs. Clinton defends covering abortion in health plan

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hillary Rodham Clinton has defended the decision to include providing for abortion in the proposed national health care reform. "We're not going to make people on the extremes of this issue happy," Mrs. Clinton, wife of the president, said in a television interview. "But I think we're striking the right balance. ... What we are doing is saying that under pregnancy-related services, those decisions will still be made by the way they are currently made." Hospitals and doctors "who do not wish to in any way to condone or participate" in abortion services would have "a conscience exemption," she added. But the plan also would take a significant step toward reducing the need for abortion by expanding access to family planning, she said. "I want to live long enough to see abortion rare in this country," she said. "I want it to be legal, I want it to be safe, but I want it to be rare. If we do what I hope we will do in this plan, which is to provide better access to family planning, we will avoid this issue in the future."

Mormon Church excommunicates feminist

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A feminist who charged that Mormon "ecclesiastical abuse" was a problem throughout the church said Friday she has been excommunicated. Lavina Fielding Anderson, 49, is one of six scholars and feminists to face church disciplinary hearings in a 10-day span. Many say the actions amount to a church purge of those considered intellectual heretics. "This is a source of profound sorrow to all of us," Mrs. Anderson said. "But I really felt spiritually prepared for this decision. I expected it." The actions came months after elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles identified feminists and homosexuals, "so-called scholars" and intellectuals as the three dangers facing the 8.4 million-member Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Those summoned contend the wave of disciplinary hearings is evidence of a purge of members who publicly differ from church leaders on issues of doctrine, history, women's roles and intimidation by authoritarian church leaders. A lifelong Mormon and daughter of a bishop, Ms. Anderson was summoned to a disciplinary council late Thursday. She refused to attend, however, saying she felt the subject of her latest research, "ecclesiastical abuse," was a churchwide problem and beyond the jurisdiction of the disciplinary council. The letter informing her of the council's decision said she was guilty of apostasy. "It is because you are outside the principles of the gospel and are leading others with you," she quoted the letter as saying.